REASON

AN

Insufficient Guide

TO CONDUCT

MANKIND in RELIGION.

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MANKIND *in* RELIGION.

Set forth in the following Particulars, *viz.*

I. Why REASON is not, and REVELATION is, a sufficient Guide, to conduct Mankind in Religion.

II. The Terms RELIGION, REVELATION, and the LIGHT OF NATURE explained.

III. That there is no such Religion as the *Religion of Nature*, no such Light as the *Light of Nature* in Religion, to be allowed by Christians.

IV. An Enquiry into the Nature of REASON, and that it is no such natural Perfection, absolutely such, as it passes for.

V. Some Instances of the *Religion* and *Morality* of the chief *Philosophers*, and of the principal Cities of the *Gentile World*, that were the most Refined and Philosophical, with regard both to their Doctrines and their Practice, at the Promulgation of the *Gospel*.

Εἰ μὴ λογισμοῖς καὶ συλλογισμοῖς καὶ σοφίσμασιν ἑαυτὸς ἐπίτρεψαν, οὐκ ἂν ἔπαθον ὅπερ ἔπαθον. Chrysost.

By CONYERS PLACE.

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AN
Insufficient GUIDE
TO
Conduct Mankind in RELIGION.

IF Reason were a new and untried Guide proposed, of the Sufficiency of whose Conduct in Religion, Mankind had never yet had any Experiences, then it would have been a proper Way for those, who contend for its Right and Title to such Conduct, to set out those its Powers and Abilities, and to magnify and display those its Virtues and Excellencies, that constitute the Qualification of Sufficiency to a true and accomplished Guide, and to give us all the happy Omens of the desirable Consequences, that must hereafter attend Mankind's committing themselves to so safe Hands, and following their lawful and rightful Leader in Tracks of moral Virtue and natural Re-

ligion, ſo illuminate, as Reaſon, with the Light of Nature in its Hand, muſt direct them along in; and, by dint of Argument and Logick, make out its Title to this Prefecture.

But when Mankind have now for almoſt ſix thouſand Years perpetually, had the fulleſt Experience of the Sufficiency of this their propoſed Conducter, as well as of that of Revelation, the greateſt Part of Mankind having lived four thouſand Years together under the Conduct of Reaſon, and the Light of Nature, thro' which Period 999 Parts in a thouſand (as they would have it) had Reaſon only for their Guide; the Queſtion in Diſpute is downright Matter of Fact, and the Point in Iſſue, whether Reaſon has approved itſelf a ſufficient Guide to Mankind in Religion, or not; and to be tried by Evidence, and appeal to Experiences, and the Teſtimonies of paſt and preſent Ages.

I know ſome learned Perſons apprehend terrible Conſequences from the Truth of this Calculation allowed, *(Dr. Waterland's Poſtſcript to Scripture vindicated)* as throwing Reflexion in conſequence upon the Juſtice and Goodneſs of God; but, for my Part, I ſee no Reaſon we have, unleſs it be for Curioſity, to diſpute the Calculation with them; which, be it right or wrong, is of no Moment in the Diſpute on either Side, neither does any thing follow, from its Truth admitted,

admitted, to the Deiſts Advantage, but quite the contrary: nor, if the Calculation were reverſed and counterchanged, and the 999 in a thouſand had lived under Revelation, would it help its Cauſe; which, turn it whether way you will, proves nothing on either Side.

If the Calculation is true, and *that one* Part in a thouſand, (as they would have it) under that long Period of 4000 Years, appears to have been better conducted in Religion than the 999; then the greater they make the Diſproportion, and the longer the Time, ſo much ſtronger they make the Evidence and Demonſtration of Inſufficiency againſt the Light of Nature and Reaſon. If, under ſuch abundant Trial, Reaſon never acquitted itſelf to Satisfaction in its Office of Conduct, and the Evidence for the Neceſſity of Revelation is ſtill the ſtronger and more indiſputable; and, for near 2000 Years laſt paſt, many Nations having lived under the Direction of each of theſe Guides, many, by Turns, under that of both, having changed and re-changed their Conducter; having firſt lived under the Light of Nature and Reaſon, and then under that of the Chriſtian Revelation; and then relapſing again into their former State of Being, under the Conduct of the Light of Nature or Reaſon ſome, and ſome under that of pretended different Revelations; Providence has, by ſuch Varieties

of glaring Antitheſes, decided the preſent Diſpute for us; and ſtill does ſo, by ſo many ſtanding Monuments of the Inſufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct; and left room for us, by ſuch multiplied and lengthened out Opportunities, by Trials and Examples, in all Times, from all Quarters, to convince ourſelves of our own Impotency to conduct ourſelves by our natural Powers, unaſſiſted by his Interpoſition, and his helping Hand to ſet us right, and keep us ſo; after he has given Mankind ſo great Cauſe, inſtead of contending for their Reaſon's being their Guide, to complain of its Ignorance and Treachery, and to look back with Shame and Horror on the barbarous and wild Condition that Revelation found them brought into, and to bleſs themſelves for being delivered, by it, from the Darkneſs that many Nations, by ſtill living in, thereby proclaim the Inability of that falſe Conducter; it is monſtrous to find Men meditating a Relapſe againſt the Demonſtrations that they are ſurrounded withal, and contending againſt God's Revelations to us as earneſtly, as if the Weſt or Eaſt-Indies were the envied and enlightened Parts of the World, and the Chriſtian the benighted, and made ſo by Revelation.

That Nations, before barbarous and ſavage, by the Introduction of Chriſtianity, have become civil, cultivate, and humane, is plain; and can they give us any Inſtances of Nations,

Nations, that were before polite and cultivate, that, by becoming Chriſtian, have degenerated into Barbarity? Have any People improved themſelves by apoſtatizing from Chriſtianity, or by being deprived of it judicially? Have any of thoſe Nations, who have lived ſo long without Revelation, guided by the Light of Nature and their Reaſon, at any time, any where, recommended the Sufficiency of their Guide? Have any of thoſe, who, renouncing its Conduct, changed it for that of the Chriſtian Revelation, done it for the better or the worſe? Or have any of thoſe, upon whom the Experiment has been made, who, after being Chriſtian, have been recommitted to their old Guides, been enlightened either in Religion, or improved thereby in any Part of human Culture? Whether, in ſhort, the Subjects of the Light of Nature, or thoſe of Revelation, have enjoyed the clearer Light in Religion? For if the Succeſſes of each Conduct appear to be uniform, and the ſame ſtill, no Arguments can ſtand againſt Matter of Fact ſo atteſted.

As to the Conſequence they pretend to draw from the ſuppoſed want of Univerſality of Promulgation to divine Revelation, that Reaſon is either a ſufficient Guide to Mankind in Religion, or God is cruel and unjuſt, it is a ridiculous Bugbear, grounded on blaſphemous Preſumption.

That

That God is *Juſt* and *Good*, is no more than that God is; and is the common Foundation admitted on both Sides of the Queſtion; and we can therefore meaſure the Goodneſs and Juſtice of all Providences by that; but we cannot infer back again, from Acts of the divine Adminiſtration, againſt God's Juſtice and Goodneſs: For Example; were Mankind indeed left 4000 Years without Revelation, and a ſufficient Guide in Religion? God is juſt and good; therefore their being ſo left was juſt and good; or, was Reaſon to which they were left a ſufficient Guide? that alſo was juſt and good: But whether it was, or was not, a ſufficient Guide, we are left to the Conſequences and Experiences of its Conduct to judge from; if we are ſure that they were ſo left, and no leſs ſure, that Reaſon, to which they were left, approved and demonſtrated itſelf an inſufficient Conducter, all that we can conclude from it (tho' God had not diſcovered to us how they came to be ſo left) is, that they were deſervedly ſo left; God does not do Things becauſe they are good or juſt, but they are good and juſt becauſe he does them; becauſe he is the ſupreme Rule of Juſtice and Goodneſs, and the Determinations of his Will the original Standard and Meaſure of what is ſo, and its Cauſe conſtitutive.

We have no Notion of thoſe Proportions of Relation, that conſtitute Juſtice and Goodneſs between the Creator and his Creatures.

To make ſuch Inference, ſuppoſes us to be competent Judges of the divine Adminiſtration, and Maſters of all the Secrets of God's Government.

To confine God's Treatment of Mankind to our Notions and Conceits of Juſtice and Goodneſs, muſt make mad Work; ſince the ſame Form of Reaſoning would faſten the ſame Blaſphemies of *cruel* and *unjuſt* upon God, from the daily Occurrences of common Providence; where, if Mankind did not ſubject their imperfect Notions of Juſtice, Goodneſs, and Wiſdom, to the divine Actions, as their Standard, the formidable Horn of this Dilemma muſt be run upon; for it is by giving up only our Conceits of Juſtice and Goodneſs to the divine Adminiſtration, that we aſſure ourſelves of all thoſe Parts of Providence being juſt, good, and wiſe, that are otherwiſe irreconcileable with them, unleſs by denying evident Facts.

Had thoſe, who draw and urge the Inference of God's being *cruel* and *unjuſt*, from the Inſufficiency of Reaſon to conduct Men in Religion, a good Opinion of the Juſtneſs of the Conſequence, they would have a better of the Premiſes; the Inference from which need not ſcare us, becauſe it does not

not engage them, we find, to profeſs and acknowledge them; for, as the Ruin of *revealed*, that is, as will appear, of all Religion, is the End they propoſe, in contending for the Sufficiency of Reaſon and the Light of Nature to conduct us in Religion; ſo, were they ſure that that End would equally and more effectually follow from its Inſufficiency, we have no reaſon to think that they would fall out with us about the Means, if they gained but their End; but would give us our Choice from whether Side of the Queſtion we would have it deſtroyed, if the Conſequences of our Inſufficiency of Reaſon, did the Buſineſs as effectually as that of their Sufficiency, could they perſuade us into it, would do: And, as they muſt perceive it harder for them to make good the new Doctrine of Reaſon's Sufficiency, where the whole Stream of Hiſtory, and the Conſent of the World, runs full againſt them, than that of its Inſufficiency, the Doctrine that has been always in Poſſeſſion; ſo, durſt they depend upon the Conſequence, that it made God *cruel* and *unjuſt*, and conſequently no God at all, they would readily come into it, and ruin us with our own Principle, and not oppoſe what introduced all that they would have, and ſave themſelves the Trouble of a doubtful and impolitick Oppoſition, to gain their End from a contrary Quarter.

If

If the nine hundred and ninety nine Parts of Mankind in a thouſand, which they tell us of, that were four thouſand Years together under the Conduct of Reaſon and the Light of Nature in Religion, had recommended the Sufficiency of thoſe their Guides, with that Superiority of Advantage above the thouſandth Part, that was under the Conduct of divine Revelation, that that thouſandth Part has done its Conduct beyond theirs, as it would have been a clear Caſe on Reaſon's Side, and an abundant Demonſtration of the Sufficiency of its Conduct; ſo the Caſe being juſt the contrary, makes an equal Demonſtration of its Inſufficiency: For let Men talk and reaſon how they will about it, it is the Succeſſes of a Guide's Conduct, and how it has fared with thoſe under it, that is the only ſure Proof of Sufficiency. Have thoſe under his Conduct fared better than thoſe under a Rival Guide, that ſets up a Title to the ſame Office? If thro' a long Courſe of Years, thro' which a Guide has exerciſed that Office perpetually, the conducted appear to have been miſerably miſled, and to have had all the Reaſon in the World to complain both of the Ignorance and Treachery of their Guide, ſhall a Sophiſter come with his Syllogiſms, and pretend to beat down the Evidence of ſuch Facts? To cry up the Sufficiency of ſuch a Guide, is by Reaſon to perſuade Men out of their Senſes. Can any

Man think him a ſufficient Pilot, or fit to be truſted, who, thro' the whole Courſe of his long Practice, has hardly ever carried a Man right, or ſet him ſafe aſhore? that has caſt away more Fleets than he has ſaved ſingle Paſſengers? Were every Man, that our Deiſts produce as Examples of the Sufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct in Religion, a Million, and every Philoſopher, whom they quote, an Empire, and every Year they lived an Age, yet if the Failure of the reſt of Mankind in religious Knowledge and Practice were chargeable on Reaſon, and lay on the Guide's Side in his Diſabilities or *Depravations*, let them come whence they would; if either thro' Difficulty, or Unclearneſs, or Imperfection in Reaſon's Directions, the Misfortune happen'd; Reaſon then would not be a ſufficient Guide, tho' it were the only one; and the Argument for the Neceſſity of divine Revelation, and againſt the Juſtice and Goodneſs of God for leaving Men to ſuch a Guide, would be as ſtrong ſtill, as it is now turned againſt it.

The Inſufficiency of Reaſon *in Fact*, our Adverſaries know is too notorious to be denied, and how juſtly they pretend to make light of it, will hereafter be more particularly conſidered; and that they do it not really, I think they betray by the great Uſe which they make of Examples, when they have got one or two, which they think for their Turn.

Turn. How often are *Socrates* and *Plato*, &c. brought upon the Stage?

It is a very bad Note of Sufficiency of Conduct on Reaſon's Side, that, to give itſelf the greater Authority and Reputation, it has frequently took to itſelf the Name of Revelation, and put off its religious Inſtitutes under that Character; an Argument of its own conſcious Inſufficiency. Its preſent Patrons themſelves attempt to draw in their Religion of Nature under that Character; nor has there till now appeared that Set of Men, who have not reſented as Scandal and Reproach the having human Reaſon for the Original of their Religion.

Reaſon, in all Men, is too long in its Minority to be a ſufficient Guide to them; a great Part of Life is paſt before it is allowed to ſet up for itſelf, or to be tolerably qualified, with the greateſt Helps and Application, to exerciſe its Office of Conduct in Religion, or even in civil Life.

And in its greateſt Maturity and Perfection, 'tis too rude and uncultivate, in the greater Part of Mankind, as they are univerſally digeſted and circumſtanced, to be conſulted with any Succeſs, ſo as to diſcharge the Duties of Religion thro' every Step of Life, by Anſwers returned from this ſo uncertain Oracle.

The young, the ſimple, the illiterate, and almoſt the whole female Sex, by the Nature

and Reaſon of Things, are left in a miſerable Condition, and given up to a woeful Conducter, if their own proper Reaſon is to be their Guide in chief in Religion, the Foundation of whoſe Religion is divine, or at leaſt civil Authority, without which kept in their Eye, to ſend them at every Turn to *the Nature and Reaſon of Things*, to know what to do, and to ſtand ſtock-ſtill till Reaſon brings them back an Anſwer from them, is the Way to have little done, and leſs well done in Religion, or any Thing elſe. The Choice of what Authority they will be conducted by in Religion, by the Nature, and Reaſon, and Circumſtances of their Sex, is all that Reaſon can do towards the Conduct of the greateſt Part of Womankind in Religion: And indeed were not the Road of Life all along poſted out for us by divine, and under that by human Authority, had we not the Authority of common Standards univerſally and publickly eſtabliſhed, by the Help of which we direct and aſſure ourſelves of the Road before we come to travel it, or make the Diſcovery by any Collections of Reaſon from the Nature and Fitneſs of Things; as we ſhould ſet out very ill provided, ſo we ſhould be towards the End of our Journey, before our Reaſon could ſhew us the Way. A Man might indeed ſet up Land Marks for thoſe that come after him, but too late for himſelf. If Authority, not Reaſon, were to conduct

conduct them, without building upon which, and acting upon it, both in Religion and every Part of Life, no Man would diſtinguiſh Good or Evil, Truth or Falſhood, Right and Wrong, Virtue and Vice, by his Reaſon, from the Nature and Fitneſs of Things, any more than he would what's bitter from what's ſweet, wholſome Food from what's Poiſon, *&c.* which he that will not take upon Truſt, will convince himſelf from the Reaſon and Nature of Things, when 'tis too late.

There cannot, in ſhort, be a more unequal and unfair Diſtribution of Conduct to Mankind in Religion, than to make every one's Reaſon to be his Guide; for thus the poor, the weak, the helpleſs, who have the worſt of it in every Part of Life beſide, would have much more ſo in Religion; ſome middle-aged Men of Leiſure and Subſtance, who had learned to exerciſe Reaſon with the greateſt Strength and Advantage, might brag of its Sufficiency, but none elſe. But by divine Revelation, God, taking the Conduct into his own Hands, and opening a ſhorter and eaſier Way of Conduct, by Faith and Authority, levels the otherwiſe unequal Diſtribution of Sufficiency of Conduct, and makes Things even on all Sides; and has ſilenced this heathen Oracle by thoſe who had the leaſt Title to any of its boaſted Sufficiency of Conduct; *for where is the Wiſe? where is the Scribe? where is the Diſputer of this World?*

Has

Has not God made fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World, &c?

But I proceed to examine particularly the Merits of the Sufficiency of this Guide, Reaſon, to conduct Men in Religion, by explaining the fundamental Terms made uſe of in the Propoſition of the Queſtion, *viz.* 1. Religion. 2. Revelation. 3. The Light of Nature. 4. Reaſon itſelf.

I. *RELIGION.*

Religion is the Worſhip of God.

Thus far both Sides of the Queſtion, and all Mankind are agreed; and this indeed is all that the Name *Religion* firſt and ſimply intends, without any Determination of Form, Mode, or Circumſtances; and when we ſtop not here, but carry the Notion further, beyond this general Definition of it, this ſtill is included as the ground and common Foundation in all the Enlargements of its Signification. Together with this, it ſometimes ſignifies *that comprehenſive Rule, to which we ſhould conform our Sentiments and Actions in reference to God and Man*, (Dr. *Conybeare.*) But this is beyond the Bounds of the general Notion and Definition; and what that learned Man adds (and *to Man*) is not within the Definition; for Duty to our Neighbour is no proper Part of the Worſhip of God or Religion at all in itſelf, nor otherwiſe than by poſitive

positive Reduction, as it is brought under the Definition, as considered as Duty to God, made so by positive Command of God, and thereby is made to terminate in, and refer to him, as any of the common Actions relating to animal or social Life may be. It also signifies the Acts, inward or outward, by which God is worshipped. Whatever the Worship of God executes itself, by the particular Modes and Circumstances, with which it is clothed, be they what they will, are called Religion.

Those therefore, who contend for *Reason* being a sufficient Guide to us in Religion, must intend thus much at least, that *Reason* and *the Light of Nature* lead us safely thro' all that is contained in this general Notion and Definition of Religion, *viz.* that it is *the Worship of God.*

And, *First*, therefore, as Earnest of its sufficient Conduct in consequent Matters, that, by inevitable Notices and thorow Convictions, it secures all Men of the Foundation thus far, that there is a *God to be worshipped.* And by natural Religion, the Author of *Christianity as old as the Creation* understands the Belief of the Existence of a God as its first Article; and that *it is evident by the Light of Nature, that there is a God:* And a Failure in Knowledge or Belief here, tho' it were but once, and in few Particulars, would yet look like a scandalous Instance of Insufficiency

ficiency in our celebrated Guide, *Reaſon*, and a Reproach not eaſily to be wiped off; for one might at leaſt expect thus much from ſuch a Guide with ſuch a Light, having likewiſe, as they own, human Nature, without Light or Guide, inclined to their Side, that there never ſhould have been under their Conduct ſuch unnatural Monſters as Atheiſts; and yet we find, that there not only have been, of old, whole Nations, (*quibus nulla Deorum ſuſpicio*, de Nat. Deor.) *into whoſe Heads no Suſpicion of the Being of a God ever entered*, which is confirmed alſo by modern Diſcoveries; we are told alſo of the *Acrothoites*, an atheiſtical People, that made an exemplary End.

But theſe, it will be ſaid, were Perſons wholly degenerate, and by ſome Accidents ſunk below the Species, in whom *Reaſon*, together with Nature's Light and its Pretenſions, were wholly loſt and extinguiſhed; Human Forms without human Nature.

Well, be it ſo; but then at leaſt there ſhould not have been philoſophical, that is, rational and argumentative Atheiſts; and yet, to the Shame of *Reaſon's* Conduct, and that of the Light of Nature, how many Inſtances have we of Men naturally ſagacious, of clear Heads, and vigorous Thoughts, who have yet miſcarried as to this? and this too in the Times and Places, where Reaſon had its greateſt Improvements, and the

Light

Light of Nature ſhone the brighteſt; ſo that the leaſt that *Tully* ſays of the Philoſophers, is, that *plerique Deos eſſe dixerunt, the moſt Part of them ſaid that there were Gods,* (*De Nat. Deor.*) ſome doubting, others abſolutely denying that there is a God; others, in Words, pretending to own it, but in Deed, and in Conſequence, deſtroying it: And the World is very uncharitable, and their own Writings ſtrangely miſconſtrued, if ſome of the Gentlemen, who ſo vigorouſly contend for the Sufficiency of Reaſon to conduct us in Religion, are not of the Number of the laſt of theſe, and themſelves living Inſtances of the Inſufficiency of their own Reaſon in this Fundamental, and the exerciſing it with the greateſt *Freedom* of Thought, yet convict themſelves of the Falſhood of that, which they take ſo much Pains to perſuade us into; nay, Men of uncommon Parts and Thought have miſcarried here, and in ſuch a Manner as has given *Reaſon* and the Light of Nature no ſmall Trouble to unravel, what, by the ſame Reaſon, and the ſame Light of Nature, theſe Men had perplexed, and to undo the Miſchiefs themſelves had done, which is a Demonſtration that all is not ſo clear from that Quarter as it ought to be, and ſome would have it. Reaſon, we find, is forced to work its Way thus far, rather groping and *feeling* after God, as in the Dark, than by clear Evidences, and by indirect and

round-about Ways, and by Argument tied to Argument, to help itſelf along in the Search, whoſe connected Knots are very apt to ſlip, and to prove not worthy of Dependence at laſt; ſo that it is a ſort of Triumph and Glory, as of a Victory gained by *Reaſon*, to go thro' ſucceſsfully with the difficult Task of leading Men to this firſt Truth, that there is a God; and great Applauſes are, we find, given to ſuch Performances, which are regarded as uncommon Monuments of human Abilities; and yet, were not the Perpetuity and Univerſality of Tradition, originally founded on divine Revelation, called in to aſſiſt; their Reaſon and the Light of Nature, notwithſtanding all their *Anticipations* and *Ideas* to favour them and Philoſophy, would balance its own Services againſt Atheiſm with anſwerable Diſſervices; but Reaſon and the Light of Nature, laying hold of Tradition, and the Helps that Revelation has afforded Mankind, then indeed, by Reflection on the Creatures, confirms to itſelf this Foundation of Religion, that there is a God; but where the traditionary Hints, which came from Revelation, are worn out, and quite loſt, the Light of Nature and Reaſon, we find, have not proved ſufficient to keep up in Men the Senſe and Conviction of this firſt Truth, together with the Loſs of which, all the Virtues and Powers of Nature ſink and degenerate into ſavage Brutality.

lity. And *Tully* accordingly (*De Nat. Deor.*) after he had made his philoſophical Managers ſay all that Philoſophy ſuggeſted to prove, *that there are Gods*, when it came to the Turn of thoſe who are the Repreſenters of his own and the *Roman* Faith, inſtead of proving there is a God, or reſting in the Arguments the reſt had offered, aſſign Tradition only as the unconteſted Argument and Foundation of their Belief, *that there are Gods*; quod mihi perſuaſum eſt autoritate majorum eſſe Deos, *it is from the Authority of our Anceſtors, that I am perſuaded that there are Gods.* Opiniones quas a majoribus accipimus de Diis immortalibus; —— ego vero eas defendam, ſemper ſemperque defendi; —— nec me ex ea opinione —— ullius unquam oratio, aut docti, aut indocti movebit. (*Lib.* 3. *De Nat. Deor.*)

And *Grotius*, (*De ver. Rel. Chriſt. Lib.* 1. 11.) *Hæc autem notio nempe Deum eſſe, &c. This Notion, that there is a God, may be found always every where, neither is affected with any Viciſſitudes of the Times; which* Ariſtotle, *a Man not chargeable with Credulity in Things of that Kind, took Notice of; and there muſt be ſome Reaſon for this, which may extend itſelf to all Mankind, which can be no other but the Oracles of God himſelf, or Tradition, which has deſcended from our firſt Parents.*

Grotius does not think the Light of Nature and philoſophical Reaſonings worthy to be named amongſt the Cauſes of the Univerſality of Mankind's Belief of a God, nor thoſe *Igniculi* and *Scintillæ*, or any other, either natural Notions, or rational Arguments, to be ſufficient for it, which are ſo much inſiſted upon, and which *Pareus* is ſo very fierce for, that he charges *Oſtorodius* with Hereſy, for ſaying no more than *Grotius* here does, calls him *impudent*, his Opinion *impious*, *brutiſh*, *more than barbarous*, (Rom. 1.)

Well, but let Reaſon and the Light of Nature have the Sufficiency of their Conduct in Religion granted them thus far, ſo as to ſecure to Mankind the Subject of Religion and its Object:

Yet, *Secondly*, They ought not only to aſſure all Men that there is a God, but conduct them to the Knowledge of the true God; and this not by a Train of artful Syllogiſm and elaborate Speculation, but by Evidence, plain and clear, and level to the Capacities of all Men, and eſpecially to thoſe of the Generality and Bulk of Mankind; but Reaſon's Conduct here, as to this, and indeed in every Thing elſe, that has not the Evidence of Senſe, is by Ways ſo intricate and tedious, ſo much Pains is to be taken to be qualified to be conducted by it, to feel the Convictions of its Conſequences; ſo much

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ado there is to follow it, tracing out the Way to its demonſtrated Truths, that, did not Authority ſtrike in, and take its Office out of its Hands, Mens Proficiency in Knowledge would be very ſlow Work, and hardly one Man in ten would be much the better for it; but would prefer Error and Ignorance to the Fatigue of ſuch Conduct, which their natural or civil Circumſtances make them incapable of proſecuting. One Man, he forms a Demonſtration that there is a God, and but one God; a few others, they perceive the Force and Strength of it, but their Reaſonings and Demonſtrations are nothing ſtill to the Body of Mankind, who muſt aſſent and come into it, upon the Authority of theſe few, or not at all, and muſt take it upon their Words, upon which Mankind's Aſſurance of all the great Truths, not only in Religion, but of all thoſe diſcovered in natural and civil Life, entirely reſt, and neceſſarily muſt do ſo, without one Grain of Reaſoning of their own about the Matter.

And conſequently, if Reaſon is ſufficient to conduct them to the true God, it ought to make it clear to them that there is but one God; for to lead them thus far right in Religion, is the leaſt can be expected from a ſufficient Guide. This one might have hoped to have found done to every Subject leſs under Reaſon's Conduct, without any Exception, and not only to here and there a ſtrag-

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ling Philoſopher, but to every Man, at leaſt, that had Leiſure and fair Opportunities, and who wanted neither Capacity nor Application.

But here *Reaſon* has failed in its Conduct with a Witneſs, by the Acknowledgment of its Advocates, having filled the World with Polytheiſm and falſe Gods innumerable, making every Thing a God but the true one; and the Failure is ſo very groſs and ſcandalous here, that inſtead of all Mankind being conducted right without Exception, all without Exception were wrong; nor can one ſingle Inſtance be produced of this Truth profeſſed but by the *Jews*, or ſuch who had it from them, and not their own Reaſon, and this too inconſiſtently with themſelves, and diſgraced by ſome idolatrous Object propoſed for that one God: And the *Jews* themſelves had it not from the Light of Nature or their own Reaſon, but by Tradition from their Patriarchs, and the Law of *Moſes*, (*Buxtorf's Syn. Jud.*)

The Author of what he calls *a modeſt Plea for Reaſon*, &c. in his *Reply*, &c. endeavours to play the cunning Man notably here, by palliating this ſcurvy Part of Reaſon's Conduct, which he thus ſmooths over: "'Tis "obſerveable, that as the Revelation of *Mo-* "*ſes* excels the beſt heathen Theology, in "teaching the Worſhip of one God, ſo it "falls ſhort of it in not expreſly teaching "future

" future Rewards of Obedience to the Law,
" which is founded on temporal Promiſes
" only; whereas many of the heathen Phi-
" loſophers profeſſedly taught, as the Sanc-
" tion of the Law of Nature, a future State
" of Rewards and Puniſhments; and God
" left the *Jews* to the Evidence of natural
" Reaſon to infer the Certainty of a future
" State.

This firſt Obſerveable, that *the Revelation of* Moſes excelled Heatheniſm in teaching the Worſhip of the one true God, is a Piece of News fit to be made an Obſerveable of to thoſe who have no Knowledge how the World has paſs'd; and its *excelling Heatheniſm* is a well-bred Way of expreſſing Compariſon between the Worſhip of the one true God and Idols and Devils, as if both were good; but yet the Worſhip of the one true God the better: But his other Obſerveable, which is to make Matters even again between them, by giving them Advantage for Advantage, and Failing for Failing, and making Heatheniſm have the beſt of it, and outdo the *Jewiſh* Revelation, as leſs expreſly teaching *the Doctrine of future Rewards and Puniſhments, which many of the heathen Philoſophers profeſſedly taught*, as he ſays, *is a modeſt Obſerveable beyond all Truth.* Where to meet with his *many Philoſophers*; where to find them doing what amounts to *teaching* the Doctrine of future Rewards and Puniſhments,

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and doing this ſo *expreſly* and *profeſſedly*, I cannot imagine, unleſs its being amongſt *Plato*'s golden Dreams, and made the Subject now and then of philoſophical Chit-Chat, for ſome few to amuſe themſelves withal, when they had nothing elſe to do, as an agreeable Imagination fluctuating in the Brain, without Certainty or Foundation ſufficient to raiſe either Faith or Hope upon, or unleſs two or three ſaturnine and ſullen-ſoul'd Men, deſperate with Pride, Rage, and Diſappointment, making uſe of it to ſteel themſelves to go thro' ſtitch with the horrid and execrable Perpetrations that they were bent upon, is to go for *expreſly* and *profeſſedly* teaching this Doctrine, to ſupport Suicide and Aſſaſſination; or unleſs Poets are to paſs for Philoſophers, and the roving Flights of their Imaginations are to paſs for *profeſſedly* teaching the Doctrine of future Rewards and Puniſhments; all which, ſuch as it was, came not originally to them from their Reaſon, or the Light of Nature, but was derived to them from the *Jews*, amongſt whom the Immortality of the Soul, the Reſurrection of the Body, and future Rewards and Puniſhments, are the common and eſtabliſhed Articles of their Faith, (*Buxtorf. Syn. Jud.*) and appears to have been always ſo; which ſufficiently proves them to be founded on their Scriptures, and that they were neither founded on Reaſon or the Light of Nature, to whoſe Evidence

Evidence this Author, without Reaſon or Authority, ſays at a Venture, *had left them.* That theſe Articles of the *Jewiſh* Faith are neither new nor modern, we find; for our Saviour lays the Foundation of the Belief of the Reſurrection in *Moſes*, (*Matth.* xxii. 9.) and tells the infidel Freethinkers of thoſe Days, that *they erred not knowing the Scriptures, nor yet the Power of God*; and *Luke* xx. 37. *that the Dead are raiſed*, even *Moſes* (εμήνυσεν) *ſhewed at the Buſh:* And that it was then common Doctrine, appears from *Martha* (*John* xi.) *I know that he ſhall riſe again.* And St. *Paul* (*Acts* xxiv.) *which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both juſt and unjuſt*; and (*Acts* xxvi. 6.) he calls it the *Hope of the Promiſe made unto* our Fathers, *unto which Promiſe our twelve Tribes inſtantly ſerving God, Night and Day, hope to come*; and (*Heb.* xi.) ſhews it to have been the common Faith of the *Patriarchs.*

If we look back into Mankind's Acknowledgments of God, and the different and uncertain Opinions that were the Faith of the heathen World in theſe Particulars, we find ſcandalous Failures in all Nations in ſome Ages, and in moſt in all; diſmal Proofs of the Inſufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct! till the Chriſtian Revelation took them out of the Hands of theſe wretched Conducters, and has opened their Eyes, ſo far as it has

been believed, and its Influences have reached, tho' leaving Monuments enow ſtill remaining, one would think, to prevent Relapſe, and cure them of ſetting up their old blind Guide any more: And one would think, that all Hiſtory were blotted out, to hear Men, at this Time, magnifying Reaſon's Conduct, and contending for its Sufficiency, againſt that Revelation, that has ſhot ſo much Light thro' the World from Pole to Pole, and given them thoſe Improvements of Knowledge, with which they contend againſt it; for the Chriſtian Revelation, like ſome magnificent Body of Light riſing in the Eaſt, has ſigned the Steps of its Progreſs with Tracks of Illumination, as it has paſſed along, illuſtrating Mankind, not only with religious Knowledge, but as its *affectiæ* and *pediſſequæ*, with Sciences, Arts, and cultivate Manners, brightening Mens Thoughts and Manners from barbarous to civil, and has no ſooner left Nations to Reaſon and the Light of Nature again, but they have ſunk back into *Darkneſs and cruel Habitations:* Who cannot ſee that the World is plainly ſtreak'd and chequer'd with Light and Darkneſs, as with White and Black, as the Light of the Goſpel has ſhone or been clouded? And the Remainder of the heathen World, and Nations apoſtate from Chriſtianity, bear the ſame Teſtimony againſt Reaſon's Conduct in Religion, that the diſperſed and vagabond

Jews

Jews do for the Truth of Chriſtianity againſt themſelves; they are both living Monuments againſt what they profeſs.

Reaſon is ſo far, alas! from being able to diſcover to Mankind the Immortality of their Souls to any Degree of Aſſurance and Satisfaction, that had Men nothing but its faultering Efforts to depend upon for it, the Generality of Mankind would hardly find out, that they had any Souls at all, more than Beaſts. The utmoſt they could find out, would be, that they were the Top-Animals, and that the Frame of their Bodies gave them Advantages above others; and were Revelation ſilenced, and the Conduit of Tradition ſtopt, by which it deſcends, the Doctrine of its Immortality would ſink under the ableſt Pens of the ableſt Rationaliſts, into a dead Notion. It is its being rooted in Faith, founded on divine Revelation, that enlivens it into a Principle that influences Life and Action, without which, and unaſſiſted, Reaſon would, in the Generality of Mankind, determine againſt it, rather than in its Favour, and leave it, at beſt, ſuch an uncertain Reverſion, that few would baulk the Appetites of Nature, or forego Conveniencies for its Purchaſe; but would cheriſh it rather as a pleaſing Dream, than a ſure or certain Hope; for how ſhould we know how long any Thing that God has made, is deſigned to laſt? or be ſure that any Thing ſhall endure for ever

the ſame, or not? No Man can, by his Reaſon, prove or ſatisfy himſelf, that the Sun or Stars will endure till To-morrow, or any other Form in Nature, but by Faith only; much leſs that any Thing elſe that is, or does live, ſhall do ſo eternally, of whoſe Subſtance and Form no Reaſon can ſatisfy him.

Thirdly, If Reaſon is ſufficient to conduct Men in Religion, or the Worſhip that is the true Worſhip of God; then it would appear, that ſomewhere, ſome Time or other, ſince the World began, that they have eminently diſtinguiſhed this their Sufficiency, by inſtructing ſome of the Subjects of their Conduct, to worſhip God after a proper and worthy Manner, and by Forms of Worſhip agreeable to his Will, and ſuitable to the Dignity of his Nature, and the Majeſty of his Divinity; and particularly by ſuch as are founded upon *the Nature and Reaſon of Things:* For it would be odd, if thoſe who are ſo ſqueamiſh and delicate, as to object to the Chriſtian Sacraments, that are Signs both innocent and ſignificant, and to the Matter and Form of all Actions poſitively inſtituted to be Parts of the Chriſtian Worſhip, that they are Things indifferent, that is, Duties not founded on *the Nature and Reaſon of Things*, if under the Conduct of their accompliſhed Guide *Reaſon* and the Light of Nature. The like not only appears to have been always, and

and everywhere done, but Things worſe than indifferent naturally, in themſelves evil and abſurd, as they own. The groſſeſt Immoralities have been the chief Materials of divine Worſhip; obſcene Myſteries, abominable Idolatries, and the groſſeſt Superſtitions, vain and vile Rites, were everywhere the νομιμὰ and the πάτρια, the eſtabliſhed Worſhip and Rule of Religion, that Philoſophers directed Men to ſtick to, and did do ſo themſelves; which was notoriouſly the Caſe in all Nations, in all the Ages of the heathen World.

But the Inſufficiency of Reaſon in Fact, its Advocates confeſs, and make light of, and pretend to come off from, by pretending,

Firſt, " That this Argument founded on " the Idolatries, Superſtitions, and Immora- " lities of the Gentile World, ſhews the ge- " neral Corruption and Depravation of Rea- " ſon in Fact only, and which being applied " to the Corruptions of Chriſtianity in Fact " alſo, ſhewed as much the Inſufficiency of " Scripture as of Reaſon. " (*Def. of the Plea*, &c.)

Rem. They may put a bold Face upon it, by putting *But's* and *Only's* to the Inſufficiency of Reaſon in Fact, as if there were little in it.

Yet Inſufficiency of Reaſon in Fact, is actual and real Inſufficiency, 'tis certain, ſo far as that Fact reaches.

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It is Fact only that discovers Nature to us with Certainty; and it is from its outward Operations and Exertions of itself, that we can best and only discover and infer the Degrees of the Powers and Virtues of the active Principle within, and its Qualifications.

Let them but produce Instances of the Sufficiency of Reason in *Fact* to conduct Men in Religion, answerable to those of its Insufficiency; or but one Instance to Millions to those of Revelation's Sufficiency, and it would go farther than all they have to offer beside in Reason's Behalf.

Where *Fact* appears not to be accidental, but perpetual, constant, uniform, universal, and where Effects are without Exceptions, still the same; it must either be from Nature orginally, or from invincible Habit contracted next to Nature: And if Reason, as a religious Guide, has always failed in *Fact*, it must be either from Negation or Privation of Abilities in it, as a Cause and Principle in that Matter; for all Men, to do always the same Thing wrong the same Way. Will any Man call this Impotency and Insufficiency in *Fact only*, never once to have the Luck to stumble right? It argues the Heighth of Indisposition and Privation of intellectual Habit in their Reason; and if it ever was naturally endued with it, quite lost.

But they tell us, "That the Idolatries, Superstitions, and Immoralities of the Gen-

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" tile World were from the general Corrup-
" tion and Depravation of Reaſon.

Rem. It does not appear to me, that *Reaſon* was ever inſtituted or deſigned to conduct Men in Religion at all, as their Guide in chief, tho' Mankind had continued in the State of Innocency, and his Reaſon had never loſt any Thing of its primitive and original Integrity, nor fallen into thoſe *Corruptions* and *Depravations*, which they acknowledge; yet I cannot ſee what Grounds we have to think, that the Worſhip of God was to have been left to human Diſcretion; but as there would then have been a free and open Correſpondence and Intercourſe between Man and his Maker, ſo his religious Duty would have conſiſted of ſuch freſh Services as God ſhould, from time to time, have poſitively enjoined and required at his Hands, as Servants that are continually in waiting, and in their Maſter's Preſence, are not left to their own Diſcretion to ſerve their Maſter, but depend upon poſitive Directions to do what he pleaſes to make their Duty to him; to do this; to be ſure to let alone, and not to meddle with that; for it is what is done in Obſervance of poſitive Orders only that makes Service. Thus, to dreſs the Garden of *Eden*, to give Names to the Creatures, to obſerve the Laws of Matrimony, not to eat of the forbidden Fruit, are Inſtances of poſitive Duty, and God's exerciſing Obedience to him, not by

by Diſcharges left to the Conduct of his Reaſon, but by Revelation dependent on himſelf, and became high Acts of Religion, which, without poſitive Command, had not been ſo. Man's Religion in Paradiſe would have been like that of the Angels in Heaven, that ſtand continually in God's Preſence, *to do his Commandments, hearkening to the Voice of his Word*; like that of his Hoſts and Miniſters, *that do his Pleaſure*, without conſulting the Reaſon and Nature of Things. The Rule of Service is the Maſter's Will, and ſo far as a Man does what he thinks fit, he ſets up for his own Maſter, and acts with no Relation to God as his Servant, not ſo much as an unprofitable one; and, if his Actions are, in other Reſpects, reaſonable, yet they are not reaſonable Service.

What ſignifies it to the Matter in diſpute, whether Reaſon was originally a ſufficient Guide to Men in Religion, or not? ſince it is not what it once was, but what it now is, that concerns us. What ſignifies it, if it retains the *Jus* of being Mankind's Guide, if it has loſt the Power of executing and rightly diſcharging the Office? Is a blind Man therefore a ſufficient Guide, becauſe he had once good Eyes, and has loſt and ſpoiled them by his Folly? Or muſt a Cripple be ſtill a ſufficient Conducter, becauſe he had once Abilities, but has brought himſelf, by his Irregularities, to Incapacity? To confeſs the

Inſuffi-

Inſufficiency of Reaſon in *Fact* in Religion; when the Circumſtances of the Fact amount to the ſame with always, is giving up their Cauſe, and then conteſting for it back again.

And the Reaſon given for this Inſufficiency in *Fact*, inſtead of an Apology, is an Aggravation, and makes it a criminal and ſtill more inexcuſeable Inſufficiency, which was from *Corruption* and *Depravation*: The immediate Cauſes of this *Corruption* and *Depravation* are aſſigned to be *Vice*, *Superſtition*, and *groſs Immoralities*, (*Def. of the Plea.*) a ſtrange Account of this *ſufficient Guide*, that it is not only *corrupted* and *depraved*, and from the Beginning has been perpetually ſo, but *corrupted* and *depraved* by thoſe very Things, that, as a Guide, it was its Buſineſs to ſecure Mankind againſt. Is that a ſufficient Guide that is blinded, and miſled by the Noſe out of the Way, by thoſe very Things, from which the Danger of Deviation from the Road of Happineſs was to be apprehended? Is that a ſufficient Guide, that is perpetually fooled and led wrong by thoſe underling Powers and Faculties that it ought to direct and command? that is enſlaved by its own Miniſtry? Is that a ſufficient Guide, that is caught ſtill in the ſame Snare? that is carried wrong by the ſame Temptations, thouſands of Times repeated? that no Warnings can make wiſer? Thus, one may ſay of

a Perſon that has always egregiouſly played the Fool, and never done one wiſe Thing, that he is but a Fool in *Fact*, but in himſelf an able Manager and admirable Judge; thus, of the vileſt Fellow, that has made himſelf notorious, by an uninterrupted Courſe of Rogueries, that he is an excellent good Man, only depraved and corrupted in Fact by Vice and Immoralities; an able Pilot truly, but a moſt unfortunate one, ſo eaſily ſeduceible, as to run always on the ſame Rocks; an able Phyſician, but full for ever of the Corruptions that he profeſſes to cure.

Nay, ſometimes it is not Reaſon, but the Law of Nature itſelf, that is abſolutely *perfect*, *eternal*, *immutable*, and all that, that was corrupted and depraved.

Ibid.) But now we are told again, "That "it was not the Inſufficiency of Reaſon, but "the undue Uſe and Neglect of it, and Man-"kind's Inattention to it, that the religious "Errors and evil Practices of the Heathens "were owing to.

Rem.) If Reaſon was *corrupted* and *depraved*; if Vice and *Superſtition*, that it ſhould have been the Antidote to, corrupted and depraved it; what ſignified it to have attended to a Guide thus diſabled and debauched in *Fact*, till, in *Fact*, it was put in a better Condition? And what an incredible Inattention in Mankind was this, that hardly a Man, for four thouſand Years together, ſhould hearken

to

to his Reaſon? And what better were they for having this accompliſhed Guide, which they attended to no more than brute Beaſts that have it not? Or, if they had attended, its Depravations were ſuch, that it would have been never the nearer.

But we are further told, "That Reaſon, "in itſelf, conſidered as the only Guide of "the Actions of a rational Agent, is ſuffici-"ent, is as demonſtrative as any Propoſition "in *Euclid*; —— and therefore, in a State of "Degeneracy and Corruption of this Reaſon, "by Superſtition and Vice, it muſt be ſtill "ſufficient, if Men have Minds and Will to "apply their ſerious Attention to the Light "of it, (*Ibid. p.* 26.)

Rem.) Strange Reaſoning! becauſe a Man healthy, ſound, and intire, could do ſo and ſo, that therefore that ſame Man, ſick, crippled, and hampered, muſt ſtill be able to do the ſame, if he will but give his Mind to it.

Ibid.) "That Men might always have at-"tended to their Reaſon, if they pleaſed, as "well as they may attend to the Doctrine "of Chriſt.

Rem.) But as bad Luck would have it, what all Men always might have done, not ſo much as one Man once ever did do with good Effect; and is not this monſtrous, to have every-body always neglecting Attenddance on their Reaſon; never duly uſing it?

Ibid.) "An impartial Attendance and Obe-
" dience to the Laws and Dictates of natural
" Reaſon, would always have guided Men
" to Happineſs, to ſpiritual Happineſs, and
" the Favour of God, —— if Men had been
" but well diſpoſed, and made a right Uſe
" of their Reaſon.

Rem.) But they never did, it ſeems, impartially attend; and how ſhould they? when *their Reaſon was, at the ſame time, confounded with Superſtition and Errors in the ignorant and greateſt Part of Mankind.*

Ibid.) "That the Religion of Nature is
" eaſily and perfectly diſcoverable by every
" Man, even by thoſe of the meaneſt Ca-
" pacity.

Rem.) And yet not diſcovered by thoſe of the greateſt. They ſhould firſt make us ſure that there is ſuch *a Religion* as this under the new Name of *Nature*, and which it is; and then we might judge how eaſily and perfectly every body may underſtand it.

Mr. *Chubb.*) "That a Man, by the Exer-
" ciſe of his Underſtanding, may eaſily
" know what is true Religion; becauſe it
" conſiſts in acting agreeably to his Nature,
" Relations, and Circumſtances.

Rem.) And is it indeed ſo very eaſy a Matter for every Man to know his *Nature*, *Relations*, and Circumſtances; and, when he does know them, to act agreeably to them, when the leaſt Article of theſe ſo eaſy Points,

to

to know one's ſelf only, is thought Work enough for the Life of a Philoſopher.

Auth. of Chriſt. as old as the Crea.) "It "is (*viz.* the Religion of Nature) more eaſily "and more perfectly diſcoverable by every "Man, than either the Proof or Meaning of "any Revelation can be.

Rem.) Cannot God make a Thing as *eaſily* and *perfectly diſcoverable* one Way, as he has made it another? And that this eaſieſt Way ſhould have met with the worſt Succeſs, and the hardeſt and worſt with the beſt, in diſcovering the one true God and his Worſhip, makes it a ſurpriſing Paradox.

But here, to fright us from inſiſting on the Inſufficiency of Reaſon *in Fact*, *founded on the Superſtitions* and *Immoralities* of the Gentiles, and the *Corruption* and *Depravation* of Reaſon, we are told, that theſe, applied to the *Corruptions* of *Chriſtianity in Fact alſo*, *ſhew as much the Inſufficiency of Scripture as of Reaſon*; *for*, *if theſe groſs Errors and Corruptions have been*, *and may ſtill*, *prevail*, *notwithſtanding the due Uſe of the Goſpel Revelation*, *it plainly follows*, *that the Goſpel is not a ſufficient Guide.* (Auth. of the Plea, *&c.*)

Rem.) If (as this Gentleman would have it) the Inſufficiency of the Goſpel Revelation, *in Fact*, were as evident and great, as that of Reaſon, by *Corruptions* and *Errors*, equally groſs

groſs under its Conduct, thro' Defect in that Conduct; then indeed the Argument, as *to Fact*, might as well be dropt, as he would have it, ſince their Recriminations upon Revelation would balance our Charge againſt Reaſon; and then indeed the Title to the *Jus* of Conduct would not be worth the diſputing, but the Cauſe might as well be thrown up, as contend for the Right of ſuch Guides. But this Parallel of Inſufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct to that of Revelation, as ariſing from the ſame Cauſes of *Corruption* and *Depravation*, is an unjuſt and ſhameleſs one, and hardly holds good in one Particular.

Firſt, If Revelation is only allowed and ſuppoſed to be, it is of Courſe a ſufficient Guide; but, from Reaſon's *Being*, it does not follow, that it is either a ſufficient Guide, or a Guide at all to Men in Religion; and as Reaſon's being allowed to be a ſufficient Guide, deſtroys the Neceſſity of Revelation, ſo Revelation, tho' only ſupplementally added, whether to preſide, or to be ſubſervient to Reaſon, implies Reaſon's Inſufficiency for the Office. To make *Revelation a Hand-maid* to what they call the *Religion of Nature* and Reaſon, is a very *unfair* and *unjuſt* Repreſentation; and it ſeems *unadviſedly* rather than from ill Purpoſe to the Chriſtian Cauſe, that the Author of an Eſſay upon the Uſefulneſs of Revelation, (*Diſc.* 3.) ſays, "In Fact the "latter (meaning Revelation) is no more than Hand-

" a Hand-maid to the former (*viz.* Reaſon and " the Religion of Nature) neceſſary indeed, " becauſe the Weakneſs, and Ignorance, and " Corruption of human Nature have ſo made " it; but, in itſelf, no further neceſſary than " as it promotes, and advances, and eſtabli- " ſhes the other; the firſt is the End of all, " and the latter entirely ſubſervient to it.

It has hitherto been thought an Honour and high Recommendation of Philoſophy and human Reaſon, to be employed as Hand-maid to Religion and divine Revelation; but the Maid is now, on the ſudden, turned Miſtreſs, it ſeems, and the divine Miſtreſs muſt be *entirely ſubſervient* to human Nature, and the divine Will an underling Tool, to wait, in a miniſterial and ſervile Way, on what is *weak*, *ignorant*, and *corrupt*, till the haughty Madam ſhall think fit to diſmiſs her wholly from her Service, for which ſhe is already declared to have little or no Occaſion.

Tho' Reaſon and Revelation were, as they would have it, both *corrupted* and *depraved*, and thereby both inſufficient *in Fact* to conduct Men in Religion; yet there is a wide Difference with Regard to the Manner of their becoming ſo, and to the Quality and Degrees of the *Corruption* and *Depravation*.

Firſt, With Regard to the Manner. In Reaſon it is a criminal Inſufficiency, which itſelf is acceſſary to the bringing upon itſelf, being depraved and corrupted by Mal-diſ-

charge

charge of Duty, and thereby juſtly forfeits its Right of Conduct, if it ever had ſuch, deſerving Puniſhment inſtead of Pity. But, if, by *Depravation* and *Corruption*, *Revelation* is inſufficient, it is not only innocently ſo, and by others Fault and Malice, but its being ſo is chargeable on Reaſon alſo, that, not content to be corrupted and depraved itſelf, depraves Revelation, and then cries out againſt it, for what itſelf is guilty of. We miſrepreſent Reaſon to ourſelves, when we conſider it as a Patient only with Regard to Corruption, and as the Object of Pity, and Subject of Wrong; it is the Agent alſo, the Corrupter, as well as the Corrupted, and does itſelf the Miſchief it ſuffers; whilſt Revelation is charged as doing what it ſuffers, and its Injuries are made into a Charge againſt it, by thoſe that do it wrong; for is the Law to blame that it is perverted? Or is it the leſs ſufficient Guide to the Community, becauſe there are ſo many Thieves, perjured Perſons, Adulterers, *&c.* and ſo much Wrong is frequently done under its Umbrage? Is not the Subjects Reaſon too blind, ſtubborn, and ſelf-conceited of its own Sufficiency to be conducted by it? If Reaſon is ſufficient to conduct Men in Religion, yet let it firſt remove thoſe confeſſed predominant Depravations, that are found to diſqualify it to execute its Office with Succeſs; let its Advocates firſt ſhew, that that is done, and then there might

might be ſome Hopes of its diſcharging its Office in Fact, better than it yet has been found to do; but for ſuch a confeſſedly diſabled and indiſpoſed Principle as it is, ſtrong in nothing but Preſumption, and vain Conceit of its Excellencies, in this bed-rid Condition, to claim to be Mankind's Guide, is to put the finiſhing Stroke to the Demonſtration of its Weakneſs.

2*dly*, The Parallel between Revelation's Conduct and Reaſon's, does not hold good, with regard to the Nature, Quality, and Degrees of *Depravation* and *Corruption*. Under Reaſon's Conduct, Men may be Atheiſts, or believe in and worſhip not only more Gods than one, but thoſe falſe ones, as has been obſerved; may deny Providence, the Immortality of their Souls, *&c.* nay, the moſt cultivate Reaſoners are moſt liable to miſconduct Men in theſe Fundamentals of Religion; ſo that *Ælian* has obſerved with Admiration, "That none of thoſe, who "were reputed Barbarians, ever denied the "Being either of God or of Providence, or ſo "much as doubted of them; whilſt Reaſon, "improved by Art and Philoſophy, had "made many Atheiſts, as *Eumenius*, *Dio-*"*genes* the *Phrygian*, *Hippo*, *Diagoras*, *Pro-*"*tagoras*, *Soſias*, *Epicurus*, *&c.*" It coſts no ſmall Pains, and requires Art and Knowledge, for a Man to arrive to be an Atheiſt; and he muſt be a refined ſubtle Rationaliſt,

of uncommon Parts, that can take that Degree, like a Plant that is raiſed by Art, in hot Beds, and rich and artificial Soils, forced up by chymical Preparations, which, left to Nature's Nurſery, dies away; and if any, who are ſuppoſed to have had only Reaſon for their Guide, have been able to think right as to theſe Foundations of Religion, which are but few, they are magnified for it to this Day, as Miracles of Men, that had made Diſcoveries beyond the Bounds of natural Ability.

But under Revelation's Conduct, no *Corruptions* or *Depravations* can reach theſe Roots of true Religion, the Profeſſion of which is Contradiction to Atheiſm, Idolatry, Plurality of Gods; an Error, that Mankind owe the Univerſality of their Conviction of entirely to the Propagation of the Goſpel, conquering, as by Force, by a Change ſudden and wonderful, human Reaſon, and the Wiſdom, as well as Power, of the World, oppoſing it; which Truth Mankind cannot fall from again, but by Renunciation of Revelation, and formal Apoſtacy to the Conduct of their Reaſon.

Whatever Corruptions of Religion in *Fact* prevail, under the Conduct of Revelation, they are chargeable on Reaſon, that will conduct, and not be conducted: That the Oppoſers of Revelation have not Faith, is it Revelation's Fault, or their Reaſon's, that

explodes

explodes it as an impertinent Principle, and ſets up itſelf in its Stead? that reaſon themſelves into Infidels, and then charge God with the Crime of their being ſo, and with Folly for obliging them to be otherwiſe. So far as Men are irreligious, ſo far they have omitted and depoſed Revelation, and ſet up their own Reaſon in its Stead as their Conductor.

How unjuſtly, therefore, are the *Corruptions* under the Conduct of Reaſon and Revelation drawn into Parallel, and called *the like Corruptions*? or, With what Face can this forenamed Author ſay (*Reply, p.* 91.) "I believe that there are Thouſands of "Chriſtians, who can give no better Reaſon "for their Religion, than an *Indian* can for "his." Which, if true, it is becauſe thoſe Chriſtians have put themſelves in the *Indians* State, and are as much Strangers to their Revelation, as they, and live properly under the Conduct of his ſufficient Guide Reaſon; ſo far as Chriſtians are ignorant of their Guide, ſo far he makes them of his own Party.

Whether Thouſands of Chriſtians may be as ignorant as *Indians*, is nothing to his Purpoſe; but whether that Ignorance is owing to the Inſufficiency of Revelation their Conductor? Whether Chriſtians, or *Indians*, or any other Heathens, compared, are, as to the Generality, more ignorant of true Re-

ligion? Whether have juſter Notions of God, or his Worſhip? except Infants, natural Ideots, Madmen, or Free-thinkers. His Acquaintance muſt lie very much amongſt his Ignorants, to raiſe their Number to Thouſands of ſuch as he ſuppoſes.

He ſhould ſhow, that there are more Chriſtians groſsly ignorant of true Religion, than there were Heathens in proportion to their Numbers; that the Number of Heathens, that had juſt Notions of God, and his Worſhip, was greater comparatively than amongſt Chriſtians. Were there but Thouſands of well inſtructed Chriſtians, he would find it hard, thro' all the Ages of the World, to produce Tens of wiſe Heathens to match their Thouſands; if Chriſtian Ignorants, and Heathen wiſe Men, were compared, the Parallel would have more Juſtice in it; and as Chriſtian wiſe Men perhaps may not match in Proportion the Number of Heathen Fools; ſo Reaſon, to the Glory of its Conduct, has made more Thouſands of religious Brutes, than Revelation truly religious Men; and may pretend to ſurpaſs, in Infamy of Conduct, the others Glory. A Chriſtian of the loweſt Form for Knowledge, knows as much of the one true God, and his Worſhip, as he thinks it a Glory to ſome of his top Philoſophers, that he keeps ſuch a Pother about, to be thought to have known.

It is a juſter Compariſon to ſay, that *if the beſt Heathens have erred, in regard to the Worſhip of God, ſo have Chriſtians too*; but then not the beſt, nor in Points equally fundamental, nor in equal Degree; to put the top Heathens and loweſt Chriſtians together, is ſomething like. It is poor Work, on our Deiſts Side, to pick out a ſingle Man or two, who have given us Grounds to believe, that they wrought out of their own Brains, without the Help of Revelation, juſt Notions of God, and a tolerable Scheme of his Worſhip; but he ſhould ſhow, what Bodies of Men, Empires, Nations, Cities, made publick Profeſſion of this juſt Knowledge and Worſhip, and practiſed the Diſcoveries of this by authoritative Inſtitution, as they did, inſtead of it, their Idolatries and Superſtitions.

But the Branch of Religion, where our Deiſts, and Religion of Nature-Men, raiſe imaginary Triumphs to themſelves, and inſiſt upon, as if here it were all their own, with regard to the Sufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct, is moral Good and Evil, moral Duties and Offices, and Virtues conſiſting partly in the Regulation of, and due ordering, our Paſſions and Appetites, partly in the practical Regulation of our Lives and Actions, agreeably to thoſe Virtues, and thoſe natural Relations, that are eſtabliſhed between us and others; which Eſtabliſhment they call the

the Law or State of Nature, and which is the Rule and Meaſure of that moral Good and Evil, which is obtruded on us, as the whole of that religious Syſtem, which they call the Religion of Nature.

What Reaſon they have to brag of the Sufficiency of Reaſon *in Fact*, to conduct Men in this moral Province, ſhall hereafter be conſidered; what I ſhall here obſerve upon it, is, that Virtue and Morality, that they make to be the chief Part, and almoſt the whole of Religion, is, in itſelf, ſimply and abſolutely conſidered, and properly ſpeaking, no Part of Religion at all; no Actions terminating in relation to ourſelves, or to other Men, or founded on any natural Reaſons or Fitneſſes of Things, are, as ſuch, religious Actions, unleſs they are made ſo by the poſitive Act of God, which gives them their religious Form; without which they may be good and proper natural Actions, with regard to Animal Life; and alſo laudable and beautiful Parts of civil Behaviour, with regard to ſocial Life; but if their being ſo is their only Foundation, they are no more Acts of Piety, than there is in the agreeable Motions and uſeful Qualities of a Horſe, or in the moſt indifferent Actions of Men, that are equally capable, by the ſame Means, of being Parts of divine Worſhip, when they are performed as Diſcharges of Duty and Service by divine Command.

Not

Not one of the Six Commandments, that we call moral, and which reſpect our Duty to our Neighbour and ourſelves, would have had any Religion in them, had not God made them ſo by poſitive Injunction, ſuperadded to their natural Fitneſs, and Agreeableneſs to the Intereſts and Conveniencies of Life; nor do I find, that either Gentile or Heathen Philoſophers conſidered Morality and Virtues as any Part of Religion, farther than Conformity to the divine Will gave them that Nature, and made them Parts of divine Worſhip; and the Heathen Philoſophers treat moral Offices accordingly, as a Syſtem of Actions diſtinct from the Worſhip of God, and from Piety and Religion; which they preſcribe Rules for ſeparately, as Buſineſs of another Kind; tho' they recommend and enforce the Practice of them, upon the Suppoſition of their being agreeable to the divine Will, founded on their experienced Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity to Life; for if Religion be the Worſhip of God, no Act can be religious, but as it is Part of that Worſhip: Whatever I do, not as directed by God, or to God, as an Act of Duty to him, however well done, it may be from ſome other Reſpects to myſelf, or others; I may cry it up as a fine Thing that I am Owner of, which may do me much Credit and Service, and others much Pleaſure and Good, and call it natural Religion, as long

as

as I pleaſe; but if God hath not conſtituted it an Act of Duty to him, let it anſwer what conſiderable Ends it will in Life, 'tis worſhipping myſelf, not God, and has no more proper Religion in it, than wearing a Diamond Ring on my Finger, or having a fine Watch in my Pocket, or a Clock, that ſtrikes for the Advantage of the Neighbourhood: What is more naturally fit than Love and Affection, or in which the Intereſts and well-being of Mankind is nearlier concern'd? yet it would have had no Religion in it as Nature's, or as Reaſon's Dictate, unleſs divine Command had brought it within the Definition: Beaſts, we ſee, that have no Religion in them, yet practice it on Nature's Foundation; and he that loves others, is not thereby religious, becauſe he does that which is naturally fit, *but becauſe he has fulfilled the* Law, *Rom.* xiii. 9. What is more unfit than *killing*; yet had not God added to Nature's Unfitneſs, poſitive Interdict, it would have been an Immorality without Irreligion; which, where the ſame divine Authority permits or enjoins, lays down its natural Unfitneſs, and becomes an Act of Religion. And St. *Paul* ſays, *Rom.* iii. 20. *By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin*; and *Rom.* vii. 7. I had not known *Sin, but by the Law*, not of Nature, but God's *Law poſitive*; *for I had not known Luſt or Concupiſcence* to be a Sin, *had not the Law ſaid, thou*

thou ſhalt not covet; and without the Law, Sin is dead, Ver. 8. ſhewing us, both Ways, that neither the natural Fitneſs of Actions makes them religious, nor the natural Irregularity of them irreligious.

An Atheiſt may do over all thoſe ſame moral Feats that we call Virtues, and may act them as founded on the Nature and Reaſon of Things; but he can have no more Title to a religious Character (nor ſo much) than a good-natured Dog or Monkey, *&c.* nor, if he is guilty of all Immoralities, ought he to be called an irreligious Man; but ought, under either Character, to be conſidered as a wild, or tamer and more harmleſs Monſter, and to be treated accordingly; but Religion no more belongs to him, than to ſay an irreligious Bear, or an ungodly Bull; and to a religious Society, that he mixes with, he ſtands in the Relation of a brute Creature, if uſeful, and harmleſs, fit to be protected, as a Horſe or Dog; if miſchievous and diſorderly, fit to be treated as a Vermin or mad Dog, that flies at his Maſter, not fit for a human Gibbet. If he exerciſes Virtues, he finds his Intereſt and Account in them; ſome are pleaſant and ſuit his Conſtitution, others profitable, ſooth his Vanity, or anſwer to him in Character or Reputation; but he is impudent to call his Actions, or their Rule, the Religion of Nature, or himſelf a Man. If *animal religioſum* be a juſt Definition of a

Man; all his Virtues are reſolvable into the Law of himſelf, to which they are Homages paid; and Conducibleneſs to his natural or civil Intereſts and Conveniencies, are the eternal Nature and Reaſon of Things with him.

A virtuous Action may be a good Action, becauſe it is ſuited to the real Intereſts of Life, very convenient, very ornamental, and all that, and *agreeable to the Nature and Reaſon of Things*; but if it is not founded on Faith in God, if no immediate Regard is had to God in the Exerciſe of it, and 'tis not practiſed as an Act of Duty and Obedience to God, and in Conformity to his Will or poſitive Command, it's moral Fitneſs and Agreeableneſs to the Nature and Reaſon of Things can no more make it to be Religion, than natural Fitneſs can make any common Action of Life to be ſo. If God is ſhut out from the moſt laudable Part of human Behaviour, Religion is ſo too; and there is no more Religion in Morality than in Beſtiality; there is no more Religion in being juſt, and true, and temperate, *&c.* and living up ſtrictly to all the moral Fitneſſes preſcribed in the beſt Syſtems of human Philoſophy, than there is in paring my Nails, ſcratching my Head, or blowing my Noſe; for theſe Actions are as agreeable *to the Nature and Reaſon of Things, and have been as eternally ſo; nor is Obligation to them any more derived from poſitive Inſtitution,*

tion, than that to any of these they call moral Virtues; and as there is as much natural Fitness in these Actions, as in those they call virtuous, whose Degree, it seems, is the Measure of their Morality, so, in Truth, they have, in themselves absolutely considered, as much intrinsick Value, at least religious Value, as the Tip-Top of those Atchievements they call moral, that are so highly extolled, and into which all Religion is resolved, if they are abstracted from the Love of God, from Faith in him, and Duty to him, as, on the other hand, make these to be the Motives, and Grounds, and Principles of any other Actions, that are thought trifling and indifferent; and they raise their Religious Value above the worthiest of those that human Opinion and moral Fitness so highly recommend from Relation to Life. Thus, there is more Piety to God, and pure Religion, if handed *in a Cup of cold Water* given for Christ's Sake, from Love, Duty, Gratitude, and Regard to him, or in a Piece of Bread received, or a Spoonful of Wine drunk, from Regard to his divine Will and Institution, than in the Practice of any Virtue in the most heroical Degree, or in the whole Course of a moral Life, led in Conformity to, and Actions founded on the Nature and Reason of Things, if Regard to the divine Will has no Share in it; or in all the Offices of *Tully*, or the Virtues of *Socrates* exercised, or in any Behavi-

our founded on Nature and the Reaſon of Things, if God is not directly worſhipped by it. Such Virtue may be important in natural Life, and what Societies cannot ſubſiſt without, as a proper Regulation of buying and ſelling, and a Pledge of Security for late Converſation and Correſpondence, if its Ties, without divine Sanction, could be made ſecure; but theſe are but low Conſiderations when ſtanding in Competition with the expreſs Will of that infinite Wiſdom, that has given them thoſe Agreeableneſſes that diſtinguiſh them to Advantage, and gives all that Beauty and Luſtre, that we falſly think is from the Nature and Reaſon of Things. Thus again, there is more Religion expreſs'd in abſtaining, tho' but from an Apple, or from any Thing elſe deſireable to human Appetite, or human Ambition, where Reaſon cries out, and Agreeableneſs to the Nature and Reaſon of Things has nothing to ſay againſt it, but leaves it more than open and free, if a poſitive Interdict is put upon the doing of it by the Will of God, than in all the religious Abſtinencies of Popery, or the rigorous Self-denials of the ſevereſt Philoſophy, or whatever Regulations of Action or Paſſion human Fancy or Reaſon has ſtamped the Name of Virtue upon.

It is the Determinations of the divine Will that eſſentiates all our Actions with real and religious Goodneſs, and the more expreſs

and

and positive the Determinations of that Will are, the greater is that Goodness, and the more beautiful, and acceptable, and truly religious is our ready Compliance with them.

Why should not God make Things, that we call indifferent, the Subjects of his Commands, as well as any other Things? since, with him, whatever we do, is, in itself, equally so: Or, why should we ridiculously fancy, that it is more worthy and becoming God to command us to do this Thing, rather than another? when, to him that made them, and made them both to be what they are, either to us, or in themselvs, they are equally insignificant; and the same *Fiat* that created them under those Distinctions of relative Importance to us, and that gave that natural standing Beauty to the one, that makes us admire and approve of it beyond the other, gives it to the other in like Manner, when it is charged with his Determination either to be done or let alone; and it is the same Effect of the same Cause, that created at first natural Fitnesses, that constitutes them, by after Determination, upon Indifferents. And as the civil Supreme, God's Vicegerent and Representative, without Regard to intrinsick Value, or natural Importance, stamps the greatest Moment upon the most trifling and indifferent Things and Actions, makes Raggs and Shreds of Paper equal in Value to Gold and Treasures; makes idle Forms, and the vainest

vaineſt Rites and Ceremonies, confer Honours, and convey Eſtates, and ſubjects to great Penalties and Forfeitures, the Neglect and Noncompliance with the Stamps of its Authority put upon indifferent Things in themſelves; and makes the vileſt Materials and Forms of Action, that Nature has given no Value or relative Fitneſs to, Teſts of Loyalty, or Convictions of Treaſon: So God, in like Manner, that diſtributes Importance to Things and Actions, as he pleaſes, by charging indifferent Things with his Determinations, brings them out of their State of natural and religious Indifference, and eſſentiates our doing, or letting them alone, with Piety or Impiety; ſince thoſe of the one ſort, as well as another, ſerve for Matter of Probation and Experiment of our Duty and Gratitude to him, and thoſe of the two ſeem moſt proper for it, which are moſt indifferent to us, or thoſe rather, which the Principles of our own natural Conduct, left to themſelves, would incline us to think moſt agreeable to be let alone, if he commands them to be done, or to be done, if he forbids them.

Where Commands humour our own Wills, Reaſons, and Inclinations, the leaſt Duty is expreſſed by their Performance to the Commander; and that Worſhip and Obedience is moſt truly ſo, where the Motive to it is moſt pure and unalloyed with any advantageous Relations

Relations from Nature and Reaſon, that recommend it.

How childiſhly muſt thoſe think of God, who imagine, that one Thing is more worthy and becoming him to command than another, from any intrinſick Dignity in the Matter, or Form of the Thing itſelf, or Action commanded? and as if our Gold and Baubles, our Jewels and Duſt, bore the ſame different Degrees of Value with him as they do with us; ſo do they make the Rates that we put upon Life, and its relative Trinkets, the Standards to meaſure the Propriety of the divine Actions by. God does not find Dignity in Things, but gives it; and the Value that we call intrinſick, and Propriety, follow his Commands and Determinations, and ariſe from them; only we are more uſed to it in ſome Things, in which it is by prior Settlement, and forgetting the Cauſe that makes one Thing more worthy to be done than another, from Habit and Prejudice, we think it ſtrange to find thoſe Things ſtamp'd with divine Impoſition, that the Want of only had placed low in our Eſteem, not conſidering, that they have now that, which makes the moſt important Relatives of Nature valuable and agreeable to us.

This is worthy of God, cries the Deiſt, that is like himſelf to impoſe upon us; and why ſo, pray? It is an excellent good Thing, very beneficial, a Matter of great Importance;

tance; and to whom, pray, is it all this? Why, to my own dear ſelf. Well, were its natural Importance and beneficial Relation to you took off from it, would you then think this ſame Thing equally fit to be the Subject of divine Command? No, to be ſure; why, with Relation to God the Commander, it is took off, and all its relative Dignity and Fitneſs, and conſequently, together with it, your Rule of judging what is fit for God to do, or not to do, vaniſhes. Is this a natural Fitneſs, to take upon me to preſcribe to God what is proper for him to bid me do, or let alone? Is it fit for me to make my little ſelfiſh Notions of *Fitneſſes* and *Unfitneſſes* of Things the Rule to judge and determine what becomes the ſupreme Adminiſtrator? to let nothing that he does be wiſe or good with me, unleſs I like it? to treat him with all blaſphemous Indecencies of Repreſentation of *childiſh*, *evil*, *vicious*, *humourſome*, *tyrannical*, and what not? (*Chubb*'s *Prev. Queſt.*) and all this at laſt, becauſe he commands us to do a Thing, which, in its Nature, ſeems, to me, to be indifferent, that is, which is allowed to have no Manner of Harm in it, but is perfectly innocent, and becauſe he had before put no Determination upon it, but had left it, as paſſive Matter, free and unconfined, to be, when he pleaſed, made Good or Evil of, and to paſs current for what his Image and Superſcription, put upon it, ſhould coin it into. It is divine Determination,

nation, which, with Things, created all their natural Fitneſſes whatſoever, and over-rules them created; makes Fitneſſes turn themſelves into Unfitneſſes, and Irreligion, if he forbid them; and the other Way, overturns them, and exalts not only Indifferences, but the moſt notorious Unfitneſſes, into the higheſt Fitneſſes, notwithſtanding all the oppoſed Relations of natural Things to us, and to each other, that may ſtand in the Way; becauſe that Determination is the Cauſe conſtitutive both of the Things, and of thoſe Fitneſſes, and of that Nature and Reaſon that moral Goodneſs, ſo far as it is Religion, ariſes from; and as in the natural World, and the phyſical State of Things, ſo far as we ſuppoſe God to interpoſe, ſo far we ſuppoſe Nature to have nothing to do, its Laws to be ſuſpended, and ſtand aſide, or natural Cauſes to turn their Efficiencies quite the contrary Way, by the ſame Rule of Eſtabliſhment that firſt ſettled them; ſo in the moral and religious World, God inverts, as he pleaſes, the Relations of Things, without any conſequent Diſorder or Confuſion; for the ſame Regularity of Subordination to him ſtill remains, and the ſame Cauſe that conſtituted the former different and contrary Relations of Things to us of Good and Evil, ſtill conſtitutes the preſent, if they are inverted: Nothing that we call Good, but himſelf only, ought to be conſidered by us

as ſtanding to God as Cauſe and End of his Action, but as an Effect it follows his Volitions, who is both the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Firſt and the Laſt: And in this Order *Moſes* repreſents to us God creating Things, not becauſe he ſaw that they were good, but he makes their being good fall on his Creation of them. *God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light*; and then, *God ſaw the Light that it was good, &c.* with an infinite and omnipreſent Mind; the End produces not the Act, as its Cauſe, but the Act the End; and that Good that with us goes before, reſults from the divine Acts as Conſequence.

Virtue, in ſhort, and moral Actions, are in themſelves at beſt but potential Religion, paſſive Matter, convertible into actual Religion by divine Determination, and by the divine Will calling it up to that Character, by adding poſitive Impoſition to it, as it would make any thing elſe to be ſo; and if it is made more frequent Uſe of, to ſecond prior Settlements in the common and ſtanding Courſe of Things, than in Things we call indifferent, it is not from any natural Propriety or intrinſick Fitneſs to be ſo, but from the Goodneſs of God, who delights to ſweeten his Service and Worſhip, by placing it on thoſe Subjects, rather than others, whoſe ſettled Relation to natural Life moſt recommend to us; ſo conjoining our Duty to him with our natural Intereſts. But without

out divine Injunction, moral Action might be a reaſonable, prudent, and convenient Part of human Behaviour, inſtituted by the Creator, to be conducible and ornamental to natural Life, and to Men engaged in ſocial Eſtate; but unleſs it is grounded on Faith, or if it is practiſed from any other Agreeableneſſes, *viz.* to Nature and the Reaſon of Things, than to the divine Will, and to God's poſitive Inſtitution, and unleſs God is directly worſhipped by it, *verily it may* have its Reward ſome other Way; but there is no more Religion in it, than in cracking of Nuts, or playing with Cherry-ſtones.

2. *REVELATION.*

Revelation is the poſitive Declaration of the Will of God, for the Rule of our Faith, and the Regulation of our Actions, agreeably to his Will; and to aſſure us of the Truth of certain Propoſitions, neceſſary to our worſhipping him acceptably; which, without ſuch ſupernatural Diſcovery of them made to us, he ſaw us become uncapable of making, or at leaſt of aſſuring to ourſelves, with Univerſality, or ſufficient Efficacy, to produce their Effect.

What we mean by *Revelation*, its Adverſaries very well know; as alſo which is that Revelation in particular, which we inſiſt on to be our Guide in Religion, *viz.* the Books

which they contend for, are both the very ſame Revelations, given under different Names, and delivered at different Times, after a different Form and Manner; that our Revelation is but another and ſecond Edition of the Religion of Nature, better explained, and in fairer Character.

By each of theſe Ways the preſent Adverſaries of Revelation make their Attempts to eſtabliſh Infidelity, and clear the Way to Reaſon's being our Conductor in chief in Religion.

As to the *firſt* of theſe, the rejecting intirely, and denying abſolutely Revelation; tho' it is their fundamental Principle, and the Root of their Cauſe, yet they do not care to throw off all Mask ſo far, as to ſtand out bare-faced Atheiſts, and Infidels profeſſed, as fairly and roundly to own and ſtand to it; becauſe it would expoſe them, and their Cauſe too much to popular Odium, and the Deteſtation of Mankind in general; for it is a ſtrange Kind of Atheiſtical Paradox advanced, to ſay, that God neither actually has, nor can reveal himſelf to Mankind; which is all one as to ſay, that he is neither omnipotent nor omniſcient, and conſequently, that there is no God at all; or that the Thing is in itſelf abſurd, and implies Contradiction, which it will be hard to make appear. And here, therefore, they act a very inſincere and inconſiſtent Part; they

cover

cover themſelves with Acknowledgments, and feigned Admiſſions of Revelation, to avoid the Inconveniencies that fairly diſowning it would bring upon them; whilſt, at the ſame time, they are making their utmoſt Efforts to deſtroy utterly the Belief of it, irriding and ſporting themſelves with it, and expoſing it, not only as unneceſſary and impertinent, and charging God with Cruelty and Injuſtice, if Mankind were either created by him originally, as wanting it, or were left by him ſince in ſuch Circumſtances as to require it from him; and repreſenting it as a Thing impracticable and impoſſible, as the Author of *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation* I find does; and from him Mr. *Chubb* (*Prev. Q.*) directly attempts to do; making it impoſſible for God either ſo to reveal himſelf, without admitting the Reaſon and Fitneſs of Things to be the Foundation of Religion, and Reaſon our chief Conductor in it, as to make us ſure that he is its Author; or to make us ſure of its Meaning, tho' he ſhould do it, which no internal or external Evidence, nor even Miracles themſelves, as he would have it, can do; except they ſee *Signs and Wonders ſome Men* would not believe, but Mr. *Chubb*, it ſeems, would not tho' he did ſee them: And if there neither is, or can be any ſuch Thing as Revelation, they think that all of courſe is their own, and that Reaſon is left, without a Competitor, to be our Guide

Guide in Religion, tho' ſtill the pretended Sufficiency of its Conduct would remain a Doubt; and it muſt be inſufficient ſtill, tho' we had it for our Guide or none, notwithſtanding all the Logick in Nature, if *Fact and Experience* ſhewed it to be ſo, whatever might be the Conſequence; for we are not to give up the Evidences of *Fact*, for the Sake of Conſequences, nor to ſubmit our ſimple and direct Perceptions of Things, to thoſe that we come at by Indirection, and the round-about Way of Syllogiſm, call it Demonſtration, or what you will, that ſeems to ſtand againſt it; becauſe all Argument is from want of Evidence of *Fact*, and all Conſequence is but an artful Contrivance to ſupply the want of it: And no Man has Recourſe to reaſoning, farther than he is forced to it, and cannot help it; any more than he would uſe a Ladder, to come at what is within his Reach, or Teleſcopes where the Eye is not deficient.

And a greater Doubt would ſtill remain, I think, if there were no Revelation, that would want to be cleared up, *viz.* Whether there then would be any ſuch Thing as *Religion*, for Reaſon to conduct us in; for without Revelation, there would be no more Religion amongſt Men, than there is amongſt brute Beaſts, whoſe want of Religion is from want of Revelation only: They are both capable we find of knowing their Owners and

and Maſters Will, revealed to them; and of paying him the Duty of proper Homage and Service upon it, by executing his Commands, and making grateful Returns. And were there no poſitive Commands given from God to Men, or ſuppoſed ſo to be, there would be no more Duty or Service paid to him by Men, than there now appears to us to be from the Animal Tribes: If any ſuch Duty or Service could then be ſuppoſed to be required by him from them; which ſhould they be ſuppoſed to offer at, in any kind, *Who has required theſe Things at your Hands?* would be a Queſtion they could not anſwer. All Duty and Service is founded on actual Intercourſe, and his Will, towards whom it is diſcharged, revealed and made known to thoſe from whom it is due. God familiarly correſponded, *Moſes* tells us, with *Adam*, and the firſt Men; and it was abſolutely neceſſary, upon ſeveral Accounts more than *Religious*, to think that he ſhould do ſo, tho' *Moſes* had not told us: It is from that original Intercourſe, and Revelation traditionally preſerved, that the Knowledge of God, and of his Worſhip, derived itſelf ſo univerſally to all Mankind. When thoſe Days of univerſal Theocracy were over, and God retreated, as it were, from this Part of his Creation, and left Mankind more to themſelves, *then Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*, to found Religion, the Knowledge of

God, and his Worſhip, upon the traditionary Notices of that firſt Correſpondence, till thoſe Notices were loſt in Idolatry and Superſtition in all the Families of the Earth, but that in which, by freſh and repeated Revelations, God thought fit to preſerve the true Knowledge and Worſhip of himſelf. How much Men depended on the Deſcent of Tradition for their Knowledge and Worſhip of God, we may learn by the Language of thoſe Days; the God of my Father, the God of our Fathers, *&c.* and amongſt the Heathens, *Dii Patrii, &c.*

He that has never given out any poſitive Commands to his Servants, nor given out Orders, at leaſt once for all, what he would have done, can expect neither the Duty nor Acknowledgments due to a Maſter. Deſtroy the Belief of Revelation, and ſettle it in Men, that Mankind have never had Preſage from God ſince the Day that he created them, nor at that Time, but have lived on always (ἄθεοι) *without God in the World*, and you fundamentally deſtroy Religion, which in all Mankind is nothing but Revelation executed. Men, indeed, to keep up the old venerable Name, may ſet up ſomething elſe, and call it Religion, as our preſent Infidels do *their Religion of Nature*; but there is no more Religion in their Morality, unleſs it is conſecrated into divine Worſhip by God's Command, than there is Loyalty in a Dog's jumping

jumping over a Stick, which his Maſter ſays is for the King, tho' it is for a Cruſt. Had not God *at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, ſpoke in Time paſt to the Fathers by the Prophets, and in theſe laſt Days ſpoken to us by his Son*; had not the Wrath of God been revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs, and the miraculous Interpoſitions of his Providence, God and Religion would have loſt their Names amongſt Mankind. As to deny Providence, is all one with regard to Conſequence in human Actions, as to deny that there is a God; ſo to deny Revelation, is denying Providence, which is but a Mode and Species of Providence; for all the Reaſons for Providence, or God's governing the World by his immediate Care, in any other Reſpect, are ſtronger ſtill for that; if God takes Care of the phyſical Conſtitution of the World, and by perpetual Acts conſervative and directive, keeps up the Order of Things, and conducts their Motions, and continually ſuggeſts that Virtue into the Springs and Wheels that numberleſs move the mighty Machine; if he magnify the Wiſdom of the Diſpoſitions of his divine Will, by the Productions of new and wonderful *Phænomena*, to warn Mankind that he is not abſent, reward righteous Nations, or puniſh impious ones, much more in the rational and moral World; the Spring of human Action, having loſt its native and genuine Vigour, and

being ſo far *depraved* and corrupted, as to be no longer *ſufficient in Fact*, to conduct Men in the Diſcharge of acceptable Worſhip to their Creator, (if ſuch Sufficiency it ever had in itſelf) more loudly called for divine Aſſiſtance, and new Light and Direction from him, (being ſuppoſed and allowed immediately to overſee and keep up the Order of any of his Works) than if *all the Foundations of the Earth had been out of Courſe*, and the Confuſion of the *Chaos* threatened to return: If God is ſuppoſed not to have cut himſelf intirely off from all future Correſpondence with our lower World when he created it, but reſerved to himſelf the Right of occaſionally interpoſing; if he did not lay himſelf under a Neceſſity of never adding any Aſſiſtances, beyond the ſettled Courſe of Things, from the firſt Inſtant he made them, let Matters go as wrong as they would, then to ſet Mankind right, that was gone irrecoverably wrong in Religion, has the faireſt Plea to be the Subject of his Care; and if God exerciſes any Adminiſtration at all, human Action, the Top and moſt eminent Object of the Creation, on whoſe Regularity the Beauty and Order of the whole, above all other Motions, depend, ought to be thought the Subject of his Regard. And whatever Powers he might originally implant in us, or however qualify us for our own Conduct in his Service and Worſhip, (one of the great Ends

he

he made us for) yet the Faculty that was intruſted with our Conduct, having loſt itſelf, and filled the Earth with religious Deformity and Diſorder, and, by long Experience, left to convince itſelf, what it would or could do towards its own Recovery, and all Mankind of its Inſufficiency: If we allow God to ſtrike in, and direct any thing, we are obliged to think that he interpoſed here, whether the Nature, Reaſon, and Fitneſs of Things is ſuppoſed to be his Rule to go by, or our Rule to judge of his Actions by, ſince our World cannot furniſh a more important Occaſion for Providence than this was; and thoſe that contend for its being needleſs and ſuperfluous, for God here to hang out freſh Lights to us beyond thoſe of our Nature, and to mark out poſitively afreſh, by Revelation, the loſt, obſcured, and forſaken Tracks of true Religion, when Reaſon had ſo notoriouſly and univerſally failed and miſled Men, and in a Caſe that ſo nearly concerned his Glory and Worſhip, and when the End of our Creation was in ſo eminent Danger of being totally defeated, leave no Inſtances equally conſiderable for the Interpoſition of Providence any other Way. If God muſt not be allowed to ſet the Movements of that chief Engine right, in the Article of its principal Concern, and which was only capable of itſelf of going wrong, and when moſt abominably it had done ſo;

they

they may with much more Reaſon pretend, that all Things elſe in Nature were left to move by the firſt original Twitle, that the Creator gave them to ſet them a going.

There is no one Principle, not even that there is a God, that is eſtabliſhed by more univerſal Conſent amongſt Mankind, than that Religion ought to be founded on divine Revelation; or that they are more ſtrongly poſſeſſed with the Truth of, and always have been ſo, than that of the Neceſſity of a divine Origin for Religion; ſo that there is hardly to be picked up in Story an Inſtance of a Religion, whoſe Inſtitution did not *ex hypotheſi* ſtand on Revelation; nor that Set of religious Doctrines or Practices, ſo rugged and barbarous, whoſe Profeſſors ſubmitted to them on any other Terms; and whoſe conſcious and experienced Inſufficiency of their Reaſon, or any Light of Nature that they had, would not have made them reſent, with Indignation, as Blaſphemy, the charging the ſcandalous Inſtances of it amongſt themſelves, with being of no higher Extraction. And it is a ſurprizing Turn of Thought, to be attempted to be wrought at once on Mankind, for a Set of Men, at this Time of Day, to bring Men into the Notion of Religion's being altogether a Creature of human Inſtitution, or its ſtanding on a Foundation that has hitherto, with univerſal Conſent, been diſavowed as ſcandalous and reproachful;

proachful; and to raiſe themſelves a Syſtem of Religion upon that Foundation, under the new Name of the *Religion of Nature*; two Terms, according to the received Notion of Mankind, whoſe Ideas are as unconnectible as natural and ſupernatural, or human and divine; and are zealous to demoliſh a Foundation in particular, that, by fair Plea againſt the ſubtleſt and moſt powerful Adverſaries, advanced itſelf to be acknowledged divine, by the cleareſt-ſighted of Mankind, and has ſupported that Character ſince, by infinite Inſtances of thorough Convictions of it in the beſt of Men; and to ſubſtitute in its Stead a new and ſtrange Foundation, that neither we, nor our Fathers knew, and which the Bulk of Mankind are incapable of knowing what it is, or means; and unable, if they did know, to trace out of its Confuſion, the Doctrines and Dictates that are to be their Directions and Rules of Duty in Religion; but muſt take them, by implicit Faith from ſome preſuming *Delineator*, who, by a Train of ſubtle Deductions, is to digeſt and range them in Order for them.

Our Infidels whole projected Scheme forms a Demonſtration againſt the Sufficiency of Reaſon's Conduct in Religion; and the very Faculty gives Evidence againſt itſelf, that it is not ſo quick-ſighted in Religion, as a ſufficient Guide ought to be, that in Six Thouſand

ſand Years together, (Time enough) neither knew its own Strength and Sufficiency till now, nor found out what it had a Right to do, and could do, tho' naturally vain and highly conceited of its Abilities all the while: And it is an incredible Story, that Mankind ſhould live ſo long under the Uſurpation of an Office of that Importance, as that of conducting them in Religion is, by the falſe Name of an Impoſtor, that never really was in Nature; that they ſhould all agree in the ſame falſe Perſuaſion, of wanting ſo much a Guide for themſelves, and ſeeking out for one abroad, and be ſo ready to cloſe with all Pretenders to be the rightful, when there was no rightful; and not find out that every Man had that ſufficient Guide at home, that he ſo looked after; that Reaſon ſhould never once ſet up for itſelf, or diſcover its Title and Sufficiency for religious Conduct; but, inſtead of this, conſcious of the deſpicable Figure that religious Inſtitutes muſt make in human Conſcience, if they bore its Name, covered itſelf, and its Forgeries of that Kind, under Revelation's Name and Character, as well knowing that nothing would paſs for true Religion under its own.

The ſame diſingenuous Part our Religion of Nature Men act ſtill more notoriouſly, with regard to the Chriſtian Revelation in particular; they are aſhamed or afraid to own and profeſs themſelves to be, and to be doing,

doing, what every body yet ſees they are, and are a doing, and are not aſhamed at the ſame time to be and to do; Heathens, Anti-chriſts, Renegadoes, and Apoſtates, however they boaſt of the Progreſs of their Principles, and the Increaſe of the Numbers of their Profeſſors, have not yet loſt all their Infamy, nor are come, we may find by this Behaviour, to ſound creditably enough for them; and tho' they are aſhamed of the Croſs of Chriſt, yet they chuſe to wear that, rather than the Mark of the Beaſt in their Foreheads; or rather, having it imprinted on their Foreheads, think it proper to wear a Patch upon the Brand, like Men of Note in other Caſes; and whilſt they attack Chriſtianity, put out Chriſtian Colours, acting the old Story to the Life, of

Jura, perjura, ſecretum prodere noli.

Or the *Newgate* Maxim of *confeſs and be hanged*; and, like their Father *Epicurus*, would fain deny that there is a God, if they durſt (*Tull. de Nat. De.*); and after his Example, would defeat in Conſequence, what they dare not directly deny, and deſtroy Religion to cure Men of Superſtition; ſo that in all their Publications, I do not find one Man of them, that fairly owns either himſelf or Deſigns, tho' in every Page he gives himſelf the Lye. *Woolſton* himſelf was ſerv-

ing Chriſt, and putting his Miracles in their true Allegorical Light; the modeſt Author of the Remarks on the Biſhop of *Chicheſter*'s Sermon on the 30th of *Jan.* knows no ſuch Men as *Deiſts*, *Atheiſts*, *&c.* and wonders where they are to be met withal. Mr. *Chubb* calls it unkind and *monſtrous* to charge him with being injurious to the Chriſtian Revelation (*Prev. Q.*) The Author of *the Plea for human Reaſon and Reply*, *&c.* in Contradiction to his Title, and the Stream of Argument that runs thro' his Pieces, is yet to paſs with us, upon his Word, for a right good Chriſtian; and we are to believe that it was pure Zeal for the Honour of the Chriſtian Revelation that ſet him to work; and that *he thought he could not do a greater Service to revealed Religion, than to ſhew that it was built on the eternal and immoveable Foundation of natural Religion, or human Reaſon* (*Def. of the Plea, p.* 3.) that he is in great Pain and *Concern, leſt the incautious Vindications and Defences of it ſhould weaken the Chriſtian Revelation, and expoſe it to the unanſwerable Attacks of Unbelievers, -- and to their Triumphs*; and, unleſs we admit his Foundation, 'tis *farewel Chriſtianity*, tho' we may perceive he had took his Leave of it before (*p.* 73, 74.) and no great Harm it ſeems, ſince *without divine Revelation Men might attain to Virtue and Happineſs*; and *Reaſon, without divine Revelation, is ſufficient*

ent to make Men happy and acceptable to God; and that the ſpiritual Worſhip of the only true God, and every moral Rule of Life, is not only eaſily diſcoverable by Reaſon, but were actually taught by the Heathens, &c. and all that was required to attain ſpiritual Happineſs; and *that the Author of* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, *has argued well and ſtrongly for the true Foundation of all Revelation*, viz. *natural Religion, which muſt be the beſt and only proper Guide of all rational Agents*; that it is derogatory *to the Wiſdom of God to command Things merely indifferent*; *and this no doubt is true.* Mr. *Chubb* indeed aſſigns Reaſons againſt an open Conduct in them, tho' not much to the Advantage of their Cauſe (*Treatiſe* 31. *a few Things offered, &c.*) "I "grant, *ſays he*, that the Unbelievers are "under a very great Difficulty in the pre- "ſent Caſe, becauſe, if they ſhould be open "and frank in declaring their Opinions and "Objections, they are not ſure they ſhall not "fall under a Proſecution; but then, tho' "this may be a proper Ground to act with "Caution, in order to guard againſt any "Evil which ſuch Freedom may expoſe "them to, yet ſurely, *&c.*"

But after they have ranſacked the Scriptures from End to End, to pick up Matter of Cavil and Calumny of any kind, that would ſtick, to beſpatter them withal, they are not ſo great Enemies to Revelation at

laſt, but that they would be glad to entitle their Religion of Nature to the Character of being ſo; which is an Evidence, that they had no great Dependance upon the Succeſs of their Efforts againſt divine Revelation, but thought, that diſputing the Title of our Religion to it might diſpoſe us more readily to conſent to let in theirs, to partake of the Character with it; and thus to end the Diſpute at laſt by an amicable Compoſition, or Coalition rather, of the contending Parties.

And this is, *2dly*, what the Patrons for Reaſon's being our ſufficient and ſovereign Conductor in Religion, propoſe to themſelves and us, as Terms of Accommodation; that, tho' *Revelation* is our Guide, yet *Reaſon* ſtill is no leſs truly ſo, and the Religion of Nature is Revelation likewiſe, at leaſt of equal, if not ſuperior, Authority, to that which challenges the Name with us as proper to itſelf, and that they are both one and the ſame, under a different Name only, and as made and communicated after a different Form and Manner, and at different Times; and, to humour this Project, one is to be called *internal*, the other *external Revelation*; one *immediate*, the other *mediate*; one *original*, the other *traditional*; one is to be *natural*, the other *ſupernatural Revelation*: By this Advance of *the Religion of Nature* to be *Revelation*, under the Conduct of Reaſon, and the ſame, or a ſuperior Revelation to the

the Chriſtian, making their Conceſſion of the Scripture's being divine Revelation, to be no Diſadvantage to their Cauſe.

Hence the Author of the Plea, *&c.* (*Reply, p.* 39.) -- "The Law of Nature being as "much the Voice and Word of God, as the "Scripture is, muſt be intended to be an "everlaſting Light held forth to Men, *&c.*

Id.) "The natural revealed Will of "God, made known by the demonſtrative "Evidence of Reaſon."

Mr. Chubb's *Scripture Evidence, &c.*) "Natural *revealed Will of God*;" underſtand it who can.

Hence the great Maſter of the Order of Free-thinkers Title *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation.*

From whence it appears, that denying or rejecting either all Revelation abſolutely, or the Chriſtian Revelation in particular, is not what they would be thought to contend for; and what they give out for its being *needleſs, uſeleſs*, and all that, is to go for nothing, and left to work its Effect another Way, on thoſe who are ſo far diſpoſed: But our Deiſts are now to be Fellow Chriſtians, and we are all to be taken into their Religion, there being not found ſo much as a Partition Wall between us to be broken down; and they are now to raiſe their Religion of Nature to the Dignity of that Character, and to allow it to ours, after ſuch a Manner, as ſhould both

eſtabliſh

eſtabliſh their Infidel Scheme with greater Glory, graced with Revelation's Title; and better ſet out under that Name to inveigle Proſelytes, and ruin the Chriſtian Revelation more effectually, and with greater Diſgrace, by their Acknowledgments of it, than any Miniſters of Antichriſt have been hitherto able to do by profeſs'd Oppoſition.

Our Religion and theirs are to be both Revelation, and the ſame Revelation; but with theſe Advantages on their Side; theirs is to be the very numerical originally revealed Religion, ours but a Copy of that obſcured Original, a ſecond Edition and Republication from it; theirs is to be the parental fundamental and ſupreme Revelation, ours but a ſubſervient one, ſupplemental to it, the Handmaid (as a ſeeming Friend unadviſedly calls it) to hold the Candle to Reaſon, to ſee more clearly how to conduct us the better by theirs, the Mother and Miſtreſs Revelation; and, what is worſt, theirs is to ſtand all intire, *one Jot or Tittle of it is not to fail*; ours is to be ſtript home to a moral Carcaſe, and ſuffer mangling and Detruncation, till each Free-Thinker cries hold: All that is poſitive, all that is indifferent, all that any Man is pleaſed to ſay is not agreeable to the Nature and Fitneſſes of Things, falls under Proſcription; Prophecies and Miracles are all to go to wreck, our Creed and Sacraments are to ſuffer amongſt

Poſitives

Positives and Indifferents, to defend the divine Institution of which, with their almighty and all-sufficient Reason, is *Popery* and *Atheism* (*Reply*, *p.* 22.) all religious Order and Distinction is to be confounded, Clergy exterminated, and all Ecclesiastical Discipline and Government to be no more. 'Let but the Body of the Christian Revelation undergo this Operation of grand Circumcision, of having its Head lopt off, its Bones broken, and being torn all to Pieces; and our Religion of Nature Men will undertake, that the Remainder shall be a beautiful Trunk of eternal and immutable Morality.

These, I think, are the Conditions upon which, if we will admit their Religion to be divine Revelation, they will take us in amongst them, and own ours to be so.

These Gentlemen's Fundamentals are,

1*st*, That there is a Religion of Nature.

2*dly*, That there is such a Light as the Light of Nature.

3*dly*, That every Man's Reason, by the Help of this Light, can perfectly discover to him this Religion.

And what they contend for, is to reduce our Christian Religion and Revelation to this their Religion of Nature.

Now, that we may not sacrifice an Ox to a Fly, and be drawn in to give up our Christianity to a Bubble Name, when there is really no such Thing, they ought, before they

they can expect any Conceſſions from us, to make it clear to us, beyond all doubt, not what they mean by this Religion of Nature, but that there really is ſuch a Religion as they mean; for this on their Side they only ſuppoſe, without Proof, and we, on ours, are ſo good as to let it paſs; and the general Overſight of our great Men has given ſuch Authority to the Conceſſion, and made it ſo much the high Mode of ſpeaking and thinking, that a Man muſt incur the Cenſure of Singularity, Affectation, and Imprudence, probably even from thoſe who are Advocates to the Chriſtian Cauſe, as carrying Things too far, for denying a Truth ſo unſuſpected, as that of *the Religion of Nature*; which however ſhall not diſcourage me from proteſting againſt it, as a falſe and groundleſs Notion, and inconſiſtent with Chriſtian Revelation, and the juſt Notion of the Nature of all Religion: For by Virtue of this Conceſſion we ſet out upon unequal Terms, and under great Diſadvantage; we allow our Infidels firm Footing to ſtand upon, and they allow us none; we grant them their Foundation, and they deny abſolutely, or diſpute Revelation that is ours, and indeed we leave ourſelves none, unleſs we will build in common with them upon theirs; and thus by giving them a Foundation, we are put to it to diſtinguiſh their No Religion from ours. Poſitive Revelation is the Foundation of all Religion,

Religion, both before the Fall of *Adam*, and ſince; and it is a falſe and idle Notion that has obtained, that Revelation is only a Supplement to repair the Decays of natural Religion, and the Goſpel only deſigned to reſtore the Religion of Nature to its primitive and original Purity; which the Scripture gives us no Grounds for; refers us to no Religion older than itſelf, but to itſelf, or what aroſe from itſelf; nor points out to us any Law or Rule of Life, under ſuch *Characters*, either of *eternal*, or *immutable*, or *independent on divine Determination*, as our Infidel Doctors talk of: Chriſt neither explains or refers us to any Law, but that of *Moſes*, nor in any Senſe appears to have come into the World to fulfil any other Law but that; nor does Revelation ever refer us to Reaſon, or the Nature of Things, to learn our Duty in Religion; but each ſucceeding Revelation ſends us back to former ones, explaining, adding to, or taking from them, as God, by the Manifeſtations of his divine Will, has, from time to time, thought fit to exerciſe human Action in Obedience to it. When the Queſtion was put to Chriſt, *Good Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit eternal Life?* the Queriſt was not bid to conſult his *Reaſon, or the Nature and Fitneſs of Things*, but what is written in the Law: How readeſt thou? Teaching us, that all Rule of Acceptance with God, is to be looked for in the Reve-

lations of his Will; and, to teach us this Leſſon, God has accordingly made what he pleaſed, from the Beginning, to be our Duty to him, without all Regard had to natural Fitneſs of Actions, or their Importance to natural or civil Life; having taught us over and over again, that Religion is not what we think fit, but whatever he pleaſes to make to be ſo; ſuiting and limiting his Commands to the particular Circumſtances of Perſons, Places, and Times: What we call the moral Law, had had no more Religion in it, had not God, by poſitive Revelation made it to have it, than the moſt trifling Rite of the Ceremonial. He made that to be Duty toward him, and a Piece of his Worſhip, which, without that poſitive Promulgation, had been ſo only to ourſelves and our Neighbour; and, to ſecure the Intereſts of natural and ſocial Life the better, added religious Character to thoſe Actions, that he had inſtituted to be naturally of greateſt Moment to it; and for that Reaſon, having brought Religion to that Perfection in its due Time by the Goſpel, in which it was to ſtand without farther Alteration in this World, he reconfirmed the former Incorporation of theſe into Religion made by the Law, and explained them to us in their utmoſt Height, to be ſtanding Parts of practical Religion to the World's End; and, to ſweeten his Worſhip to us, diſcharged it of

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all thoſe Actions, that we naturally have the loweſt Opinion of, from their little Concern to natural and ſocial Life; leaving only two of that Kind to remain, to make us ſtill remember, that, tho' diſburthened of Rites and Ceremonies, Religion does not ariſe from the natural Importance of Actions to Life; and as proper to convince us, that his Inſtitution gives a greater Weight and Neceſſity to Actions, than all natural Fitneſſes; and that greater and nobler Ends are produced by Actions that have no natural Connexion with them, as Means, than all the Reaſon and natural Fitneſſes of Things can pretend to. And thus it becomes the Lord of Heaven and Earth to act, if he pleaſes to convey Favours to us by the Uſe of outward Means, to make *what* he pleaſes to be their Conduits.

If there is any ſuch Thing as the *Religion of Nature*, it is diſcovered, they tell us, by Reaſon thro' the Light of Nature.

The *Light of Nature.*

And let us therefore now conſider, 1*ſt*, what this Light of Nature is, and whether there is any ſuch Light in Religion:

And, 2*dly*, what *Reaſon* is, that is to diſcover this Religion, by it, to us.

There is hardly a more doubtful Word, or that is uſed in more Senſes, than the

Word *Nature* is; in which of all theſe Senſes we are to take it here, as the Subject of that Light, by which Reaſon is to diſcover to us the Religion of Nature, is not eaſy to determine. *Nature* is a philoſophical or metaphyſical Term, and moſt of the Senſes, that it is uſed in, have made their Way from the Schools into common Life; it is the general Name for all particular Forms of Things, and their eſſential Qualities and Properties; or elſe it is uſed to ſignify the Principle and Original of Motions or Operations, in regard to the Order, and the determinate Courſe and Progreſs of ſuch Motions and Operations. This Principle or Original of Operation Men abſtracting, and, by Act of the Mind, ſuppoſing it to be drawn off from its real concrete State of Exiſtence, and from the Subſtance that is its Subject, they ſet before themſelves as a real, ſubſtantial, and independent Something of itſelf, and repreſent it to themſelves as ſome wiſe and powerful Agent, that is the Maker and Adminiſtratrix of the Creation under God. And this vain Idol, thus raiſed by Act of the Mind, they even deify and equal to God himſelf, as his Collegue in the Adminiſtration of the Univerſe; and the Heathens actually worſhipped it (*Hil. in Pſal.* 1.) and the Stoicks called God by that Name (*Clem. Alex.*) and ſuppoſed it a *fiery Spirit* (*Laert. Zeno, Tully, Lactant. lib.* 2. *De nat. Deor.*) *Zeno* —— *naturalem*

naturalem legem divinam esse censet, eamque vim obtinere recta imperantem, prohibentemque contraria. The Law of Nature is Divine, having the Virtue to command what is Right, and forbid their Contraries.

Here the *Reason* and *Nature of Things* are first deified; and hence the blasphemous Ascriptions of divine Attributes at present given to them.

And hence, when Effects run still in the same Channel from their Cause and Principle, it is called the Law of Nature, and we represent this imaginary Abstract to ourselves, as acting the Part of some real and rational, nay, and supreme Legislator and Institutor of Things. And Mankind have so long complied with, and used themselves to this Way of speaking and thinking of Nature, and indulged their Conceits of its being some substantial Reality, so long, and are so fond of this metaphysical Idol of their own makeing, that they cannot break themselves of fancying this artful Foolery of their Imaginations to be some mighty Being, and real Existent; and as it is the Subject of that Light, by which we are to see our Way, and our Reason is to guide us in Religion, we must mean it to be surely human Nature, or our own Nature; and this must be the Soul, that is the Form of Man, and the Principle of his Actions and Operations; and more particularly the Understanding, as

it

it either means the Faculty, ſo called, or the Exerciſe of it.

And now having ſettled the Senſe of one Word, let us come to the other, and ſee what we can make of that, and what it is.

L I G H T.

Light is a Metaphor here, and muſt ſignify ſomething that is like, and as it were Light, that bears Analogy to proper Light, by its performing the like Offices to the Soul, that proper Light does to the Eye; ſo it muſt be ſomething mediatory between the Soul and religious Objects, as ſenſible Light is between the Soul and viſible Bodies: But where we ſhall find ſuch a mediatory Thing interpoſed between the Soul and religious Objects, that may anſwer this Character, by doing this Office, I am at a Loſs, and they ought to tell us, that we may know what it is, and ſo be able to judge of the Juſtice of its Similitude to Light: They ought to ſet ſomething before us, and let us have ſomething in View by that Name, to found diſtinct Conception upon, that is either a Subſtance itſelf, or a Quality or Property inhering in ſome Subject that really exiſts; otherwiſe they put upon us an empty and vain Name, and confuſed Notion of nothing; and joining it to Nature, is *multiplying Words without*

without Knowledge, and darkening Counſel with vain Sounds.

The Scripture makes great Uſe of the Term *Light*, but points out to us ſtill the particular Object ſo called, and Principle that communicates it to us; ſo that we can clearly judge of the Juſtice of the Name, and have a fair Idea of it, whether intended in a ſimple or metaphorical Senſe; thus God is called *Light*, Chriſt is called *Light*, the Goſpel and Chriſtian Religion is called *Light*: But here we are treated like Men; we know the Objects ſo called, and perceive whether, and why, they deſerve the Name. And as our Adverſaries are very apt to clamour, if they meet with any Terms in Chriſtianity that are not diſtinctly conceiveable and intelligible, as they pretend; ſo they ſhould have avoided this in themſelves, by explaining and clearing up to us this fundamental one of their own, upon the Knowledge of which their Religion of Nature depends; and let us into the Secret of their Religion, by proving that there is ſuch Light, as this Light of Nature, and what it is; Whether it is Light that is caſt in upon the Soul, or Light that the Soul throws out from itſelf within, or intermediate Light, in which Objects are placed; for it ſeems very *agreeable to the Reaſon and Nature of Things*, that, ſince our Diſcovery of the Religion of Nature, depends wholly upon this *Light*, they

they ſhould give us the Satisfaction of knowing what it is that we are to truſt to: Is it the Soul itſelf that they mean by *Light*, as *the Spirit of Man is called the Candle of the Lord*, whoſe very Subſtance is illuminative and illuſtrative? But thus their two Terms, *Light* and *Nature*, would fall into one, and the Soul's diſcerning the Religion of Nature would be all Tautology; that the Soul, by the Soul of the Soul, diſcovers the Religion of the Soul; or by the Light of *Nature*, that is, of the Soul, do they mean ſome eſſential Virtue in the Soul, ſome Power and Faculty that it is endowed withal, by which it diſcovers religious Objects? Now the Soul has no other Faculties but *Will* and *Underſtanding*, and it muſt therefore be the Underſtanding, and the Light of Nature muſt be the Underſtanding of the Soul; and then the Terms *Nature*, as well as its *Light*, are Terms made uſe of, by needleſs Affectation, only to blind and obſcure a plain Propoſition, in which there is no Occaſion for the hard Words *Lights* or *Natures*, *viz.* that every Man of himſelf may eaſily underſtand all religious Duty, untaught and unacquired.

It is very ſtrange that ſo remarkable an Object as *the Light of Nature*, that ſo eminent an Office belongs to, as lighting Reaſon along as Guide to conduct Men in Religion, ſhould not have been more early and univerſally talked of, and known in the World; that

that ſo important a Thing ſhould be without ſo much as a proper Name, till *Tully*, whom I find quoted as the Author of it, hit upon it, and was the firſt that gave the Name *moral* to Virtue or Philoſophy alſo.

To me it ſeems much ſuch a Kind of a *Light* as our *Quakers Light* within, or the Light that informed *Mahomet* by Traduction from *Adam*.

But be the Light of Nature whence it will, or what it will in itſelf, in other Reſpects, as it ſignifies a manifeſting Cauſe in Religion (*Eph.* v. 13.) *Whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is Light*; thro' which Men are qualified to diſcover, that there is *one God, the true God, the Form and Manner of acceptably worſhipping him*; or that we have in ourſelves any, or ſufficient *Light*, to guide ourſelves in Religion, it is inconſiſtent with our Chriſtianity to allow, becauſe the Scriptures are full and expreſs againſt it; for which Reaſon I wonder that the Advocates of Revelation let ſuch a Piece of heatheniſh Imagination paſs current as it does; for the Scripture appropriates all Light in Religion, in this Senſe, to divine Revelation only, without allowing any Light of Nature at all, for Reaſon to make Diſcoveries by.

1 *Cor.* ii. 14. — "The natural Man, "or Man by the Light of Nature, receiveth "not the Things of the Spirit of God, for "they are Fooliſhneſs unto him; neither

" can he know them, becauſe they are ſpi-
" ritually diſcerned."

The Sum and Subſtance of the Doctrine of this whole Chapter, and its Deſign from End to End, is to aſſure us fully and clearly of the Neceſſity of divine Revelation, and of the utter and abſolute Incapacity and Inability of a natural Man, or a Man unaſſiſted by Revelation, by the Strength of Reaſon and Philoſophy, by any Light of Nature, or by any Power or Faculties of it, to make any Diſcoveries in Religion, which is all Folly to him, if he truſt to himſelf, and go that Way to work; and this we find ſtill has been, and ſtill is, the Truth of the Caſe in our preſent Infidels; nor can any Violences tolerably reconcile this Chapter to the Sufficiency of Reaſon to conduct us in Religion, or to admit of any Light of Nature, to diſcover (τὰ τῦ θεῦ) Religion by it.

And accordingly to call Chriſt and the Goſpel Diſpenſation *Light*, and the State of Nature, and the Condition that Mankind were in without it, in Contradiſtinction to it, *Darkneſs*, is the conſtant and ſtanding Language of the Scripture, to repreſent Mankind's Condition under, and without Revelation, by.

Matt. v. 14.) *Ye are the Light of the World.*

John i. 4, 5.) " In him was Life, and the
" Life was the Light of Men, and the Light
" ſhineth

" ſhineth in Darkneſs, and the Darkneſs
" comprehended it not.

Ver. 8, 9.) —— " *John* came to bear wit-
" neſs of that Light: that was the true Light,
" that lighteth every Man that cometh into
" the World.

Chap. iii. 19.)——" This is the Condemna-
" tion that Light is come into the World,
" and Men loved Darkneſs rather than Light,
" becauſe their Deeds were evil.

Chap. xii. 46.) " I am come a Light into the
" World, that whoſoever believeth on me
" ſhould not abide in Darkneſs.

Chap. viii. 12.) " I am the Light of the
" World; he that followeth me, ſhall not
" walk in Darkneſs.

Luke i. 79.) " The Day Spring from on
" high hath viſited us, to give Light to them
" that ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow
" of Death.

—— ii. 29.) —— " A Light to lighten the
" Gentiles.——

Iſ. ix. 2.) —— " The People that walked
" in Darkneſs, ſaw a great Light.

Acts xxvi. 18.) " St. *Paul* was ſent to the
" Gentiles, to turn them from Darkneſs to
" Light.

2 *Cor.* iv. 4, 6.) —— " Leſt the Light of
" the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the
" Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.

" God who commanded the Light to ſhine
" out of Darkneſs, hath ſhined in our

 " Hearts,

" Hearts, to give the Light of the Know-
" ledge of the Glory of God, in the Face
" of Jeſus Chriſt.

Eph. v. 8. " Ye were ſometimes Darkneſs,
" but now are ye Light in the Lord.

1 *Theſſ.* v. 5. " Ye are all the Children of
" Light, and the Children of the Day;
" we are not of the Night, nor of Darkneſs.

1 *Pet.* ii. 9.) " —— Who hath called you
" out of Darkneſs into marvellous Light.

1 *John* ii. 8.) " The Darkneſs is paſt, and
" the true Light now ſhineth, *&c.*"

Againſt all this ſo plain Evidence againſt the Light of Nature in Religion, and the Religion of Nature diſcoverable by that Light, it is by no Means a tolerable Balance, to produce that ſingle doubtful Text of St. *Paul*, *Rom.* ii. 14, 15.

" When the Gentiles, which have not
" the Law, do by Nature the Things con-
" tained in the Law; theſe having not the
" Law, are a Law unto themſelves, which
" ſhew the Work of the Law written in
" their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing
" Witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean
" while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one an-
" other."

Concerning this Paſſage of St. *Paul*, which is ſo much inſiſted on as an Acknowledgment of the *Religion of Nature*, and *the Light of Nature in Religion*, by Revelation itſelf, and from the Authority of which it is, that

that the Notion and Language, the *Religion of Nature*, and the *Light of Nature*, are acquiesced in as they are; let me observe;

1. That whatever all this means, must be understood consistently with the before quoted Representations, and many other to the same Purpose, of Mankind's Condition without Revelation.

2. That it must be understood also consistently with what he so much inculcates, that *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*; *being justified by Faith*, and having *Peace with God by it*. On which Foundation whatever Actions do not stand, let them be Acts of divine Worship, and religious in the propereſt and strictest Sense, or moral Virtues and good Works of the most accomplished Kind, if they proceed not from a Principle of Conformity to the divine Will revealed, nor are performed as Acts of Duty to God, as their first Motive; if they are grounded on natural Fitnesses, or Congruity to the Reason and Nature of Things, or Mens own Reason, they may be called Good from other Respects to human Life, but have no Title to the Name in a religious one.

3. That if the *Jews* could pretend to no Righteousness or Justification from the Works of the Law, which were the *lively Oracles* of God, much less can we suppose, that the Apostle throws out any Hopes of attaining any Degree of such Righteousness

and

and Juſtification by thoſe ſame Works, done by Men with leſs Aſſurance of Faith, and Clearneſs of Knowledge, that they were agreeable to God's Will.

4. That if the Apoſtle had deſigned to inform us, and aſſure it to us as Truth, that there is ſuch a Religion, as *the Religion of Nature*, or Religion founded on no divine Revelation; and ſuch a Light as the Light of Nature, by the Help of which, every Man might make himſelf, by the Uſe of his Reaſon, acceptable to God; that he would have delivered us this ſo important Truth in clearer Terms; and if he had ſo delivered it, he might have been told upon it, that then, as well himſelf, as the other Apoſtles, had took a great deal of Pains to little Purpoſe; and that then, as himſelf ſays on another Account, our *Faith had been vain, and his Preaching alſo vain.*

5. That if he intended to let us know that there is ſuch a Religion as the Religion of Nature, and ſuch a Light as the Light of Nature, by which their Reaſon can conduct Men in that Religion, that he yet repreſents it not to us as a religious State eligible, or deſirable for Men to be in, and which they have any Reaſon to *contend* for, as for the *Faith once delivered to the Saints*, but as the worſt and moſt deplorable Eſtate that Men can be in: And if the Being of any ſuch Religion as that of Nature, or ſuch a Light

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as that of Nature in that Religion, can be inferred from the Apoſtle's Words, yet they are ſuch as ſhew it far from his Deſign to encourage Men to be of that Religion, and to glory in it, and ſuch as place it even out of Suppoſition; that there ſhould riſe up Men ſo mad, as to take Occaſion, from his Repreſentation of this religious State, to confront Chriſtianity and divine Revelation with it, as a more excellent Way ſhown by him of Knowledge and Practice, and aſſuring divine Acceptance to Men's religious Services on the beſt and eaſieſt Terms.

St. *Paul*'s firſt and chief Deſign, in this Epiſtle, is to eſtabliſh Faith as the Root and Foundation of true Religion, without which all Attempts to pleaſe God were vain; yet it was not to be a ſolitary Faith, but a Faith that is the Root of Action, and Obedience to the Commands of God; without which, conſequent upon it, to preſs its Neceſſity, he inſinuates it as likely that the Actions of an honeſt and well-intending Heathen, to diſcharge the Conſequences of Faith without the Foundation, may fare no worſe at the laſt Judgment, than the believing *Jews* or Chriſtians inſiſting on that Foundation only without its Conſequences, may do; and this is what he tells us in this Paſſage, *when even the Gentiles* (*ſays he*, *even* Men, that is in as bad and miſerable a Condition as Men can be in) *which have not the Law*, (who, poor

poor blind Wretches, have no poſitive Knowledge of God's Will revealed to them, but are left to grope out their Way to pleaſe him as well as Men in the Dark can; when *even* theſe Men, that want the fundamental Term of divine Acceptance, believing only by Tradition, by the univerſal Conſent of Mankind, ſupported by Reflection on his Works, that there is a God; in purſuance of that their Belief, ſincerely endeavour to diſcharge ſeveral of thoſe Duties and Offices of Life, which their own Reaſon and Experience, the Determinations of Philoſophers, and the civil Sanctions of Legiſlators, recommend to them, and which, unknown to them, God has enjoined, and by his Determination made moſt convenient for Life; and thus *do by Nature* (or without divine Revelation) the Things *contained in the Law*; *theſe having not the Law*, having no certain written authoritative Rule to go by, yet as often, as by well meant hap-hazard, not by Sufficiency of Conduct, they hit upon the right, and purſue it accordingly; they thus are *a kind of Law to themſelves*, every Man, but not to another; every Man's own Determinations ſupply, in ſome meaſure, the Place of a Law to him, who is to himſelf both ſubject and Legiſlator; and thus, ſo far as they rightly and happily judge, and conſtitute to themſelves a Rule, they *ſhow the Work of the Law written* by themſelves *in their Hearts*, by

by their Actions; and these Dictations of their own Reason, and Resolutions established upon them, serve them instead of the Law and revealed Will of God, for their Consciences to exercise their Office by; *their Conscience also bearing Witness*, but after such a manner, that, as its Rule was a Law and no Law, so the Attestations of Conscience, grounded upon it, wanted proper Assurance, were loose and fluctuating, and *their Thoughts* or *Reasonings*, attended with Alternations, *the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another*; what a Man at one time thought right, at another he thought was wrong; and what one condemned, others maintained, (μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων.)

The Passage seems a Commentary on what our Saviour says, *Luke* xii. 47. "That Ser-"vant that knew his Lord's Will, and pre-"pared not himself, neither did according "to his Will, shall be beaten with many "Stripes; but he that knew it not, and did "commit Things worthy of Stripes, shall "be beaten with few Stripes:" That a sincere good Will and Endeavour to discharge the Duties and Offices of Life, agreeably to the Law and Will of God, shall, in Men in an unenlightened State, be mercifully considered, by a Mitigation of their Guilt and Punishment, and what farther may be hoped for from an Infinity of Mercy; whilst Faith and Knowledge aggravate the Guilt and

Puniſhment of tranſgreſſing God's Commands to thoſe who deſpiſe them, revealed to them.

An Enquiry into the Nature and Uſe of Human Reaſon.

The extravagantly high Characters that Reaſon is at preſent adorned withal, by thoſe who ſet it up as our ſufficient Guide in Religion, in Oppoſition to divine Revelation; its wondrous Excellencies and Atchievements that they tell us of; carrying its Claims beyond all natural Bounds, ſo as to turn it once more into an Idol, making a God of it, as ſome of the Heathen Philoſophers have done before; for *Zeno*, ſays *Tully*, (*De nat. Deor.*) *rationem quamdam per omnem naturam rerum pertinentem vi divina adfectam eſſe putat: Thinks there is a kind of Reaſon, that runs thro' the Nature of all Things, endued with divine Virtue.*

And *Chryſippus*, *naturalem vim divina ratione preditam. -- et vim divinam in ratione eſſe poſitam: That the Power of Nature is endued with divine Reaſon, and that there is divine Virtue in Reaſon:* Setting it up in open Rebellion againſt God, like another Lucifer, and a profeſſed Antichriſt, making it oppoſe and *exalt itſelf above all that is called God*; ſo that *as God it ſets as it were in the Temple of God, ſhowing itſelf that it is God*, pretending

tending to give Laws to God, to rule and controul his Actions as its Subject, to be Arbiter to diſpenſe him out his moral Attributes, to dethrone and depoſe him, and making his very Being depend on its Courteſy, treading under its Feet, with Blaſphemies and Irriſions, his holy and eternal Will; trampling down Senſe, and threatening to ſwallow up all divine Revelation; making it the Ground of Infidelity, Apoſtacy, Atheiſm, the Inſtrument of Irreligion and all Impiety; ought not indeed to tempt us raſhly to ſay with him, in *Tully* (*De nat. Deor.*) *ut ſatius fuerit, &c.* "That it would have been better, "if God had given no ſuch Thing as Rea- "ſon to Mankind, than to have given it to "be the Cauſe of ſuch pernicious Effects:" Or, *haud ſcio an melius fuerit, &c.* "I "do not know whether it would not have "been better for Mankind, to have been "without that Activity, that Penetration, "that Subtilty of Thought, which we call "Reaſon, ſince it is deſtructive to ſo many, "advantageous to ſo few, than to have it "in that bountiful Meaſure, and high Degree." But theſe fatal Abuſes of it make it high time, in order to reduce it to its juſt Bounds, to enquire into the Nature, Pedigree, and Office of this grand Uſurper, that challenges, as its Prerogative, the ſupreme Conduct of God and Men. And I will therefore,

1ſt, Endeavour to trace it thro' its Provinces, and ſet in a true Light all that paſſes as done under its Name.

And, *2dly*, conſider how far the Definitions of it, by its Advocates, juſtly entitle it to thoſe high Aſcriptions which they beſtow upon it, and to that Sufficiency of Conduct in Religion which they contend for.

All our Perceptions of Things are wrought by the immediate real Preſence to, or Contact of, the Thing perceived to the percipient Subſtance; all our Knowledge is the ſame ſenſible Perception, and of ſenſible Objects only; the Varieties of whoſe Touch or Preſſure upon that ſo tender and delicate Subject, the Soul, are what produce, together with the ſimple Perception of the Objects themſelves, that of their Differences; which Differences are the conſcious Senſations of their various Touch, and the various Paſſions attending them, which they affect the Soul and human Syſtem withal.

The Difference between rational and ſenſible Knowledge or Perception, does not lie in the Form of the Perception, which is the ſame to both, ariſing from the very ſame natural Condition of the Objects immediate real Preſence, nor from the different Nature and Quality of their Object's, which are the ſame fundamentally to both, which is Motion, Matter, and its Differences, or the different Relations of its Forms to Life; but

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the Difference between rational and ſenſible Perception or Knowledge, lies, chiefly and only, in the Mode and State of the Propoſition of the ſame Objects to the Soul, and the Quality of that real Preſence that produces the Notice and Perception of them: If the immediate real Preſence of Objects to the Soul is natural and proper, ſo that they and their attendant Differences are ſimply and directly perceived, we call the Perception ſenſible.

If that Condition of immediate real Preſence fails, and we are forced to have recourſe to Indirection and Artifice, and make it out by Supplement and Expedient, then it paſſes into Reaſon with us, and is looked upon as Knowledge of a more excellent Kind, both as to its Form and its Objects: As the Circumſtances of our Being make us have almoſt perpetual Occaſion to correſpond with ſeveral Parts of Nature, which the Littleneſs of our Subſtance, and the narrow Circumſcriptions of our Being, make it impoſſible for themſelves to be really and immediately preſent to us; hence we are neceſſitated to tranſact the Affairs of their relation to us, by Sets of Counterfeits and Proxies, inſtituted to ſtand in their Stead, and ſupply their Preſence.

When we help ourſelves out by playing this After-game of Knowledge, and remedy the Abſence of principal Objects, by the

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Uſe of theſe mediatory Tools and Inſtruments, thro' which we perceive them at Second-hand, it conſtitutes rational Perception, in Diſtinction to that of Senſe; the Method itſelf, cloathed with a ſubſtantive Name, is the *Delphick* Oracle and celebrated Idol *Reaſon*; the actual Exerciſe of it is reaſoning.

There are four eſtabliſhed Sets and Sorts of theſe Counterfeits, by the Help of which the Soul works rational Perception, and with their Preſence ſupplies the Preſence of abſent, and brings together ſcattered and widely diſtant Originals, and thro' them diſcovers, as well their different Relations to itſelf, as thoſe mutually between each other; which are; 1. Lines or Points. 2. Cyphers or numeral Figures. 3. Ideas. And 4. Words or Names.

Theſe, in themſelves Inſignificants, worthleſs both as to Matter and Form, the loweſt of Indifferents, and little better than the Shadows of Realities, are the Soul's Miniſtry in the Exerciſe of Reaſon; theſe are the Tools with which it works its great Exploits; and if God uſed Reaſon as our Rationaliſts would make him, theſe are the Furniture of the divine Mind, as well as the various Inſufficiencies that require them.

1. *Lines*

1. *Lines or Points.*

Theſe are the Geometricians Counters or ſham Originals, petty Repreſentatives of Quantities; by the Help of theſe, the Mathematician pretends, with artificial Preſence, to make up for that real and immediate Preſence, that is the Condition naturally neceſſary to the Perception of Objects; ſo as in their Quantities to perceive the Quantities of abſent Subjects, and adjuſt the Equalities and Inequalities of Bodies to each other, and their relative Proportions, without their being ſubject to its immediate Intuition; and ſettle the Magnitude and relative Dimenſions of thoſe Parts of Nature, that are themſelves remote and inacceſſible to Senſe, and widely diſtant from each other, and too vaſt moreover, intractable, unweildly, and immoveable, either to be brought together to diſcern their Differences by Compreſence, which is the only Way of doing it, or, by being immediately preſent to the Soul, the natural and proper Way, and to determine the Differences between the Subjects of Quantity, under all Forms and Circumſtances of Conſtitution, Concourſe, Figure and Diſpoſition; and the doing this paſſes for a high Act of Reaſon, and an eminent Inſtance of its ſurpaſſing all the Powers of Senſation; tho' I cannot ſee any Occaſion that there is to introduce

troduce any higher Faculty than the Exerciſe of our Senſes, and their Experiences, attended to, and remembered, to determine their Problems; the Operations of the ſubtleſt of which, and Demonſtrations, reſolve themſelves into Acts of plain and downright Senſation, only diſguiſed; and what they call Demonſtration, is to reduce Problems to the clear Evidence of Senſe, that reſolves and determines; the Lines, Points, and other Counterfeits they employ to prove and diſcern the Quantities of abſent Subjects withal, are themſelves preſent Objects of ſenſible Perceptions; as Matter and Magnitude, and all the original Subjects of their Theorems, whoſe Knowledge they work with them, alſo are, ſo far as any Parts of which are the immediate Subjects of immediate Intuition, is allowed to be ſenſible Perception, without any Rationality in it; but if we have recourſe to ſham Work, and employ Counterfeits, to bring about the Diſcovery of the ſame Subjects, and the Differences of their Quantities, then it becomes rational Knowledge, and is preferred, in Dignity of Nature, even to that Intuition of the Originals, that it is only a Supplement to the want of; ſo that the more remote Objects are from immediate Intuition, the more Counterfeits there are employed, the more difficult it is to work what is only a continued Chain of Acts of ſenſible Perception, thro' intermediate Subjects, the Knowledge

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is ſtill reckoned of ſo much the higher Note. The Buſineſs of all Geometrical Demonſtration, I take to be, to bring the Subjects of two Quantities together, and to apply them to each other, to perceive thereby their Equalities or Inequalities, without which Application, and ſeeing them both at once, it cannot be done; by carrying the Quantity of the one, thro' ſeveral interpoſed Subjects, to that of the other, ſo continually, without breaking View, or taking off the Eye, as to make them fall into one common Object, and be perceived by the ſame perceptive Act; for we can upon no other Terms perceive the different Quantities of Objects, but by ſuch Application, and making them into a common Object, and ſo perceiving their Difference, as we do a Part of a Thing from the Whole; in which Caſe it is Senſe that pronounces Sentence, not Reaſon.

A, ſays the Mathematician, is equal to B, B is equal to C, and C to D, therefore A is equal to D: By the Uſe of which Word *therefore* in their Demonſtrations, they would have it thought, that the Operations of their Demonſtrations were wrought by a ſyllogiſtical Procedure, and that the Reſolutions of their Problems was a regular Conſequence wrought from Premiſes by a Progreſs of Perceptions, Step by Step, when really there is no ſuch Matter; but all is but one ſimple Act of Perception, that the ſame Quantity is

the ſame Quantity, in whatever Subjects lodged, or thro' whatever Vehicles carried; like ſaying, that a black Yard is equal to a white Yard, and a white Yard to a green Yard, and a green Yard to a blue Yard; *therefore* a black Yard is equal to a blue Yard: All the ſuppoſed Rationality of feeling the Force of ſuch like Demonſtrations lying in remembering not to be ſo amuſed with the Variety of Vehicles, but that it is the ſame Quantity ſtill continued thro' ſeveral Subjects.

But however my Subject has led me to contend, that there is no more in mathematical Demonſtrations, than what our Senſes, duly exerciſed with the Remembrance of their Experiences, are capable of diſcharging, without Recourſe to Reaſon, diſtinguiſhed from it as a Faculty or Principle, by Superiority of Nature and Excellence, yet I would by no Means rob that uſeful Knowledge of the Glory that is due to it, by adding ſo many Comforts and Conveniencies to human Life, nor any illuſtrious Perſons of the Glory of thoſe Improvements of it by their Diſcoveries.

Cyphers or Figures.

Theſe are the Arithmeticians Counterfeits, not but any thing elſe in Nature might be ſo; but theſe trifling Scrawls are now univerſally received as the moſt commodious Tools;

Tools; to be Maſter of which, is thought ſo eminent an Inſtance of the Excellence of Reaſon, that Reaſon is looked upon as a Sort of Arithmetick, which its Name, both *Greek* and *Latin*, (*viz.* λόγος, *ratio*, both which ſignify an Account, or an Arithmetical Calculation) ſhew to be the Notion that thoſe cultivate Nations had of it. The Management of theſe or other Arithmetical Tools, was ſo highly thought of by the antient Philoſophers, that all Wiſdom and Philoſophy was reſolved into Arithmetick, which was called a divine Science or Art. *Pythagoras* thought the Soul itſelf to be Number; and *Plato* thought Man to be therefore a rational Creature, and to excel other Animals, becauſe he underſtood Numbers: Our preſent philoſophical Doctrine concerning the Nature of *Number*, and its *ratio formalis*, or Form conſtitutive, I take to be very falſe and ſilly, the Subject in the Knowledge of which Reaſon ſo ſhines.

Number, firſt, they tell us, is *diſcrete Quantity*.

Ariſtotle, for the Honour of his Predicaments, that every thing ſhould ſeem to be comprehended under them, was reſolved to force *Number* into the Service under one or other of them; but it could not have a more unfortunate Settlement given it than under Quantity; he had better have added another Predicament on purpoſe for it, and called

it Quotity or Totity, till he had a juſter Notion of it, than have placed it under that which it has no relation to.

And calling it *diſcrete*, was contradicting with one Word, what it is affirmed to be with t'other; one ſuppoſes Parts and Compoſition, the other denies it.

And then dividing it again thus defined into *Number numbering*, and *Number numbered*, is ridiculous; for is *diſcrete Quantity* a rational Agent, that it ſhould number? or, if it did, for that Reaſon it would not be Number itſelf, becauſe it did ſo; as, for the ſame Reaſon, Things numbered cannot be Number, becauſe they are numbered by it.

Arithmetical Cyphers or Figures are not, 'tis plain, themſelves Numbers, originally and fundamentally ſuch; they are neither *Number numbering*, but what ſome Numberer numbers withal; nor Number numbered, but what other Things are numbered withal; they are but an inſignificant Set of vile Counters, both as to their Matter and Forms; nor are ſo much as either natural or inſtitutional Repreſentatives of any Original in Nature, nor are like any thing in Nature expreſſed or ſignified by them, but are arbitrary Marks only; but what they are Marks of, or what they refer to, our Philoſophy leaves us at a Loſs.

Number itſelf is not a real Entity, neither is in Things without us; for when we take

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an Account of Objects with our Numbers, is it thoſe Objects that our numeral Names and Marks principally refer to, and which we keep our Account by or of, and diſtinguiſh to ourſelves by *one*, *two*, *three*, *four*, *&c.* ? But Number is the Action or Paſſion of the Soul, if Perception be ſo; and the Originals, that our numeral Names refer to, are not Objects, but our conſcious Acknowledgments of the Perception of Objects: Each perceptive Act, cloſed and finiſhed, conſtitutes a Number; I begin to perceive, the Mark for my Remembrance to myſelf that I have done ſo, of this firſt Act, is agreed to be the Name or Figure *one*; I perceive again, the Note of the Repetition of the perceptive Act, and of its Order, that it is next to the *firſt*, is the Name or Mark *two*; this Act is cloſed, and I perceive again, I mark it with the Name or Figure *three*; I ſhut up this Act, and perceive another time, I ſign it, for my Remembrance, with the Name or Figure *four*, *&c.* for Time and Perception are the ſame thing with us, and therefore when our actual Perceptions end, Time alſo ends with us, and as we begin to perceive again, Time alſo begins again, as by new Origin; which ſhews that Time is not an abſolute Object, but an Object of Relation only to our Faculties; hence we uſe promiſcuouſly Times for Acts of Perception,

with

with numeral Marks, as *ten times*, a hundred times, *&c.*

There is therefore no Number in Things themſelves perceived, but by perceiving them we introduce it; and whilſt we put down Marks, to make ourſelves remember the Iterations and Order of our own Perceptions, we make them ſerve, at the ſame time, for the Meaſure of Plurality in the Things perceived, by applying it to them, if it is of Conſequence to us ſo to do.

Numeral Names and Figures perform the ſame Office, and anſwer the ſame End to us without, that our Ideas do within: They are both Inſtruments of Memory; as without thoſe we could know nothing backward that we had perceived; ſo without theſe artificial Marks, in a Caſe where we have naturally no Ideas at all, we ſhould have no Notice of the Iterations and Repetitions of our Perceptions, or the Relations of Pluralities to us; for our Acts of Perception and Conſciouſneſſes, are more intimate to us than our Ideas, and riſe behind and within them, ſo impreſs no Ideas of themſelves, and, without Marks to help us, leave no Footſteps behind them, to know, with Diſtinction, how many times we have perceived the ſame Object; which Acts of Perception, were they not kept aſunder by our numeral Marks, would all run into one, without Diſtinction of Times and Repetitions; and were a hundred Objects

jects preſented to us a hundred Times over, tho' their impreſſed Ideas would tell us that we had ſeen them before, yet how often, or whether once or more, they could not inform us: As for Example; Let a Man either ſuſpend the Application of numeral Marks, or, applying them, not vary them, but ſay, *one*, *one*, ſtill, and he would neither be able to tell how often the Clock ſtruck, nor perceive the Difference between twelve and one, without numeral Marks to help him, becauſe there would be no Break or Clauſe between the Strokes, which his numeral Marks are the Regiſtry of, but they would be all confounded into one continued Perception, tho' the Clock ſtruck an hundred; for it is marking his leaving off perceiving, and beginning again, that makes the Strokes numerous to him, and, tho' the Clock ſtruck with Diſtinction, he would not perceive ſo.

One, they tell us, is no Number, and yet all numeral Figures and Names are but artificial ones, ſo many falſe and counterfeit Unites, and cannot be repreſented or conceived, but as contain'd under that Form of Individuality; for as Individuals only exiſt in Nature, and not collectively in the State of *two's* and *three's*, ſo neither can we perceive Pluralities or Multitude in a numeral Way, but in the Form of natural or artificial Unity. I cannot conceive, for Inſtance, a hundred Men plurally; for conceive them

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all together, and I make *one* hundred of them, and bring them into one Object, but conceive them in any Degree of Severalty, I ſtill make *ones*, and individual Numbers of them; for all Numbers, beyond *one*, are but ſtill greater and leſſer counterfeit and artificial ones, of the ſame Sort, but of all Sizes, gradually exceeding each other, ſo as to hit all Pluralities, and reduce them to the Form of Unity. I perceive a Man, and call him *one*; I perceive one other, and call him *two*, *&c.* but is the ſecond Man any more *two* than the firſt, by my ſaying ſo, and by my perceiving him at another time?

Numbers are all ſimple Objects, incapable of Compoſition or Connexion with each other; one is not the Part of another, nor are there any ſuch Wholes and Halfs amongſt them, as we make and imagine: *One* is not the Half of *two*, nor is *two* the Half of *four*; but they are each in themſelves abſolute and independant Objects, ſimple, and not Wholes, made up of each other as their Parts; as Numbers are artificial Marks, ſo their Relations, and the Ideas of ſuch their Relation to each other, is not natural, but from Agreement and Inſtitution. To ſave ourſelves Trouble in talking or Writing, we may agree amongſt ourſelves, that ſaying *two* ſhall be the ſame as *one* and *one*; and giving the Sign four, ſhall ſignify the ſame again as twice two; but there are no natural Unions

Unions follow theſe Agreements, nor any Ideas of ſuch Unions, either in the Things numbered, or in the Acts of Perception numbering, but an Union of Signs only; and as the Signs have no Foundation but Inſtitution and Compact, ſo our Ideas of their Relation have no Foundation but the Signs, and all the Idea a Man forms of *two* or *four*, is the Words or Figures ſo called.

Numeral Names are like *Genus's* and *Species*, they ſignify, under one, Sets of Objects, that are never the more one for it, either in Nature or Idea; they are like ſo many Caſes ſtamped by Authority, in which all the Degrees of Multiplicity of Individuals are incloſed; like Sums of Money of all Degrees in Bags ſealed up, or as if all Payments were contrived to be made in ſingle Pieces of all the Degrees of Value.

The acquainting ourſelves with the Names and Forms of theſe numeral Counterfeits, and learning how many times ſaying one, each of them ſaves the Trouble of, more or leſs than another, playing odd and even with them, being ready at knowing how many little ones make the greater ones, or how many little ones the greater do make; taking ſome away, and telling what others are left, or putting more to others, and telling what they are equal or unequal to, and with ſome of them numbering others, is looked upon as a diſtinguiſhed Inſtance of

Rationality; but unleſs the Compact and Contrivance about their Forms and Powers be took in to enhance the Wiſdom of Arithmetical Numbers, I do not ſee what there is in the Exerciſe of them, either as to Theory or Practice, that Senſe and Experience cannot do, without calling in Reaſon to aſſiſt.

Beaſts that are not let into the Secret of our inſtituted Signs, and that have none of their own, that know nothing of Numbers, or *twos* and threes, or counterfeit Units, perceiving Objects in their natural State of Individuality, as ſimple Monads; without Reaſon, by Senſe and Experience, know the different Relations of one or more Objects to Life, and rightly meaſure the Advantages or Diſadvantages of Pluralities, and fight or fly, not according to the Force of Individuals, but their Multitude; a Dog that would fall upon others ſingle, ſneaks to a whole Pack, and they that ſingle would crouch to him, together fall upon him; and others lay up Stores of future Proviſion for themſelves made up of Individuals, as nicely proportioned, as thoſe that do it by Arithmetical Calculation of Scores and Dozens.

As Numbers are but Expedients to relieve the Inconveniencies of a narrow and indiſtinct Comprehenſion, and bad Memory; therefore with an infinite and omnipreſent Mind, that ſees all Things at once, with a conſtant and unvaried Perception, there is

no

no ſuch Object as Numbers; God ſees all Things in their proper State of individual Exiſtence, as we do one, the ſimpleſt Thing; for to him all Things are as one Object.

IDEAS.

Our *Ideas* are as much and properly a Set of Counters, as thoſe that we number withal, and call by that Name; only theſe are a finer Set, provided by Nature, whoſe Coinage they are, inviſibly lodged within us, and of univerſal Relation; and however rational and immaterial Tools we may reckon them, yet they are as much Objects of Senſe, and ſenſibly perceived, as the Originals without us, whoſe Ideas they are, are ſo; the natural Condition of immediate Preſence and Contact more clearly ſhowing itſelf in the Perception of theſe, than in that of the Originals by the Eye and Ear; the Originals we perceive by the Stretch of our Organs, home to them, at their remote End, without and beyond them; but their Ideas within and behind them, and in the very Article of their Union, without organical Mediation, more immediately preſent to the very naked Subſtance of the Soul; and tho' Ideas excel other Counterfeits, in that they are natural Repreſentatives of the Originals, attended with all the minuteſt accidental Circumſtance of their real Perception, whilſt the

others are but arbitrary Subſtitutes, yet they are excelled by them, in that they are only Shadows and empty Forms, but the others real Things; but the ſame End and Office is common to them all, which is to ſupply the Abſence of Originals to the Soul by artificial Preſence: But we ſtrangely here miſrate our Knowledge; theſe Ideal Shadows within us, we fancy to be more excellent Objects than their Subſtances without us; we prefer theſe Copies to their Originals, theſe Images to their Prototypes, the Impreſſions to the Seals, the artificial Preſence of Things to their real, and accordingly we value the Knowledge of the Originals, wrought in us by theſe their Ideal Subſtitutes, beyond that which is wrought in us by themſelves, tho' it is by the ſame Operation; yet this paſſes by the humbler Name of Senſe, and of ſenſible Perception, as Knowledge of a baſer Sort, whilſt the ſame, if tranſacted with their Counterfeits, is Thinking, and Reaſon, Reflexion, and Remembrance, and other fine Names; for we are ſo fond of multiplying Excellencies to ourſelves, that the ſame thing, put under ſeveral fine Names, paſſes with us for ſo many diſtinct Prerogatives, Faculties, and Principles of Action; and the Notices of Objects, and their Relations to us, that we deſpiſe as groſs and animal, becauſe it is ſimple and real, becomes ſpiritual to us

and

and intellectual, if acted over again with its Experiences in Idea.

It is true indeed that our Ideas have this Advantage of their Originals, that the Soul has a greater Command over these its inbred Counterfeits, than over them, and can act and manage them with greater Ease and Dispatch, and play them with greater Convenience, in trying Experiments upon them, than it can the Originals; it carries them always about with it, and has them always at Hand, ready at all Calls of the Will instantly to present themselves, and either by Recontemplation to make farther Discoveries of the Relations of Objects to Life, or to attest and confirm those already made, so that by the Help of its Ideas, the Soul enjoys a kind of artificial Omnipresency and Omnipotency; they are our perpetual Monitors and Instructors, that both tell us what we want, and how to come at it, and when we come at it, make us acknowledge it, and assure it to us to be the same, so that we could not live or move without them; our Perceptions of Originals the first time are a mere Rencounter to us; 'tis by our Ideas, the next Time, that we know how to behave towards them.

But still we must remember, that, however advantageous and necessary Ideas are to us, that still they are but Counterfeits, Objects not equal to their Originals, and that the Reason

of

of them ariſes from the Imperfection and limited Nature of our Exiſtence; and that our Knowledge by them is but a ſecond Sight and Knowledge, inferior to that of the Originals, the primary and fundamental, to which, by Order of Nature and Dignity, it is not comparable, being but a Remedy and Expedient to ſupply it; and tho' it is by Ideas that we know Originals, yet it was the Originals that helped us to thoſe Ideas firſt; compared to which they are miniſterial and ſervile Objects, and 'tis their Uſe and Office, and not their Nature, that gives them a Dignity, but not equal to thoſe more momentous Originals, whoſe Parts by Deputation they act.

2. And that they are not proper to Mankind, but common to them with all Animals, who both have Ideas, and turn them to the ſame Uſe and Advantage that we do; they remember as well as we; they diſtinguiſh natural Good and Evil by their paſt Experiences as well as we, and exerciſe upon it ſeveral of thoſe Forms of Action that we call moral Virtues, as well as we, and to that Perfection, that we are ſent to them as Patterns to learn them from them.

WORDS.

Words are a Set of Counterfeits or ſham Originals artificially inſtituted, in the Uſe and

and Underſtanding of which, Men think that the Prerogative of their Reaſon, beyond that of Beaſts, very eminently appears.

Let us therefore examine the Ground of this Preſumption, by conſidering,

1*ſt*, What theſe Counterfeits are in themſelves.

2*dly*, What abſent Originals they are Counterfeits of.

3*dly*, What they are for.

And, 4*thly*, the Nature and Quality of that rational Knowledge and Wiſdom, that is ſhown by the Exerciſe of them.

1*ſt*, Let us conſider what theſe verbal Counterfeits are in themſelves, thro' which the Prerogative of human Reaſon chiefly diſtinguiſhes itſelf from ſenſible Perception; and ſorry Tools, God knows, they are, with which this ſo ſublime and divine Faculty of ours, Reaſon, does thoſe its mighty Feats, that we ſwell ſo upon; Variety of awkard, ſenſeleſs, and uncouth Noiſes made, or as vile Scratches on ſome worthleſs Materials; ſo that with regard to the Quality of its Set of Inſtruments that it works withal, and that will be found to be the chief Matter alſo of its Knowledge, Reaſon more juſtly may be aſhamed of having ſuch a Pack of Trifles to work withal, than to boaſt.

But, 2*dly*, What abſent Originals are they Counterfeits of? for as they repreſent nothing, nor are like any thing in Nature, but

are

are Signs merely arbitrary, and ſignify, by Compact and Inſtitution, without all Regard to natural Similitude; ſo they do not themſelves, like Ideas, diſcover the Originals that they ſtand for; and here therefore we lie under great Miſtakes; for Words are not Signs of Things, as generally ſuppoſed, in whoſe Stead they ſtand; neither immediately relate to natural Originals, but to their Ideas only in us, and ſo are Counterfeits to Counterfeits: For Example, the Words or Signs *Man*, *Horſe*, *Dog*, do not ſignify thoſe Creatures that bear thoſe Names, any more than they reſemble them, nor point directly to them; but only raiſe the Ideas of thoſe Creatures in us, and thoſe Ideas, by a ſecond Act of Reference, ſend us to them; for as Ideas ſtand to natural Originals, ſo Words again ſtand to Ideas.

And this ſhows us, *3dly*, what verbal Counterfeits are for; they are neither real or original Objects, farther than as to their Materiality, and as they are common Objects of Sight or Hearing; neither are ſignificatively the Foundation, objective or ſubjective, of any Knowledge; they neither ſignify any thing real, nor give us the Knowledge of any thing real, nor impreſs the Ideas of any new or unknown Originals, or any Originals, but only ſerve to act and manage Ideas already impreſſed, and to diſpoſe thoſe of ſuch Originals as have fallen under our Notice,

Notice, in ſuch Manner in others, as they are in us.

For Ideas in themſelves are incommunicable Objects, confined to the inviſible Subject that they are impreſſed upon in us, and cannot in their proper State and Form be conveyed abroad, or go actually out of the Subſtance they are impreſſed upon, ſo as to become Objects of Notice to others; and being thus naturally incapable of Communication, and yet Man being (ζῶον πολιτικόν) a ſocial Creature, for the Preſervation of which ſocial Eſtate, the mutual Communication of Ideas is neceſſary and eſſential, it was therefore abſolutely neceſſary to conquer the natural Incommunicability of Ideas, by ſome Art and Expedient, and by ſomething that was communicable, to make an Equivalent to what was neceſſary to be communicated, yet in itſelf both incommunicable, and inacceſſible.

To this End, Words or Symbols were pitched upon; by which, tho' we cannot ſend our Ideas abroad, yet we do their Errand to all Intents and Purpoſes of Uſe in Life, as if we actually did ſo.

By one Man's raiſing his own Ideas in others, by the Help of theſe agreed-on Counterfeits, all ſocial Correſpondence is carried on, and all Improvements in Life are made; by the Help of theſe, Mankind are enabled to club their Ideas as into a common

Stock, ſo that one Man's Collection of Ideas may become every Man's, and whole Bodies of Men, thro' future Generations, be made wiſer, by his throwing out theſe trifling Counterfeits of his own; ſo many Experiences are neceſſary for the Diſcernment of Good and Evil, and the happy Conduct of Life, and we being born without any to ſet up upon, we gather them ſo ſlowly one by one, that no Man can live independently upon his own proper Stock of them, but every Man lives upon other Mens Knowledge, and acts upon others Experiencies, took up upon Truſt; and upon Belief founded on that Authority, that is now deſpiſed as ſo unmanly; and a ſettled Tradition of Ideas is what we are all forced and thrown upon to ſubſiſt, not only ſocially, but in our perſonal Capacities; from our Birth thro' our Infancy, we have no Share at all in the Conduct of our Lives; and from Childhood to Manhood, we act almoſt intirely upon Truſt, and but little of the little Share in the Conduct of our own Lives, is founded on our own Experiences, or is Knowledge of our own getting, but is what we hear, or are told, and the Ideas of others raiſed up in us by theſe Counterfeits, implicitly received; and when we are fully Men, were we to diſtinguiſh Good and Evil, Truth and Falſhood, no faſter than we could do it of our own ſelves, it would be late in Life,

were

were the traditional Eſtabliſhments of moral or natural Good and Evil ſet aſide, before we ſhould reaſon ourſelves into all the Diſcoveries of Good and Evil, fit and unfit, that are neceſſary for its Conduct; and thoſe ſo ſettled as Principles, as to act readily and habitually upon them, without perpetual Conſultations.

Without acting upon Faith and Authority, and other Mens Words, as Principles, a Man would not be a ſocial Creature; and however Men may deſpiſe divine Authority and Revelation for their Conduct in Religion, they muſt act upon human in natural and civil Life, or their Infidelity would make them, for all their Reaſon, as downright Ideots here, as they are Atheiſts there.

Theſe verbal Counterfeits are the Subject Matter that Reaſon employs itſelf upon, and the Knowledge of the inſtituted Powers of theſe Signs, and the Ideas of what Originals they raiſe, and the expert Exerciſe of raiſing them with them, is what the rational Faculty, ſo called, chiefly diſplays thoſe its Virtues, that raiſe its Character above Senſe, withal; and yet at laſt no Man is capable of having more Knowledge, than is his own, than what his own Senſes inform him of, or what his Remembrance, which is but the Repetition of his ſenſible Perceptions, or perceiving over again in Idea, what he had perceived before in the Originals, repreſents to him;

all Improvements of Knowledge beyond this is not of our own Growth, but other People's; is raiſed on their Ideas, communicated to us by Words, raiſing correſpondent ones in us, and ſtands upon this double Truſt, that they are propounded to us faithfully and skilfully on the Communicator's Part, and received as skilfully on ours.

All Knowledge that is derived to us either from Books or Converſation, which is the main Part of every wiſe Man's Stock, and is what diſtinguiſhes a Fool from a Philoſopher, is of this Kind, *viz.* is the Knowledge of abſent Originals, or of Things, whoſe preſent Poſture and Circumſtances he himſelf has no immediate Notice of, and is knowing upon Truſt, and traced back to its Author; and his manner of coming by it is not only ſenſible Knowledge and Experience, but ſo to us at ſecond-hand thro' various Traditions, and is the Perception of Originals not only in a degenerate State, as Ideas are, but thoſe Ideas raiſed again by enigmatical Propoſition of ſham Objects; yet this is rational Knowledge derived to us by Words; it is but other Mens ſenſible Knowledge, whoſe Degeneracies paſs for Refinements with us, and make it thought ſo much better than our own.

Logick, or the Art of Reaſoning, is only teaching us how to trade with theſe Counterfeits,

ſeits, and to raiſe Ideas with them with the greateſt Certainty and Regularity, and with a Set of them, that the Philoſophical have contrived for that Purpoſe, to play faſt and looſe with them.

Philoſophers have dealt very unfairly with Mankind; they firſt magnify Reaſon, and having enhanced the Price of their Commodity, they ſhut out the Bulk of Mankind, and confine it to themſelves; make ſuch a Trade of Reaſoning, that none are capable of practiſing or profeſſing, but thoſe who learn it of them, and the Art firſt of makeing their rational Inſtruments, and then the Skill of uſing them.

Words raiſe Ideas, either, 1. *ſimply*, that is as they come into us from their natural Originals:

Or, 2. *artificially*, and compendiouſly ſuited to the Diſpatch of Correſpondence by them.

It is with thoſe of this latter Sort, unnaturally perverted and abuſed beyond the Deſign of their Inſtitution, that the State of human Knowledge, and the Nature of its Objects, is ſtrangely confounded; ſuch are *Genus's* and *Species*, and all abſtract Names, which being agreed by Suppoſition, to ſave the Trouble of Signs, to raiſe Ideas in that Manner that no Originals impreſs them, and it is impracticable in the Soul actually to raiſe them; yet this being eſtabliſhed by long Uſe and Authority, Men have been inſenſibly

ſibly drawn in to fancy, that they have not only Ideas in them anſwerable to theſe Counterfeits, but carry it further, and imagine the Names themſelves to be real Originals, ſo many fundamental Objects exiſting in Nature, in which the Ideas, which they are ſuppoſed only to raiſe together, ultimately terminate: Nor ſtops the Folly here, but they make them the chief and moſt excellent of real Beings, and inſtead of their being the Counterfeits of Ideas, Ideas are made the Counterfeits of them, and becauſe our Ideas can but confuſedly reach them, it is imputed to the Superiority of their refined Nature. Thus the real Originals of Nature, the Dignity of their Being, as well as Knowledge, is ſupplanted by theſe trifling Scrawls and Noiſes, contrived for us to come at them; and the Madneſs, as to abſtract Names, is carried yet to a greater Extravagance, and they are made not only the Inſtruments and Objects of rational Knowledge, but the Subjects and Foundation of that ſublimeſt of Sciences Metaphyſicks, the Objects of whoſe Speculations are theſe bubble Names treated as intellectual Realities; and our preſent Unbelievers have exalted them yet higher, and made ſome favourite ones of their own, *Fitneſs and Unfitneſs, &c.* tho' I cannot ſee why they ſhould not be all of an Age, as well as of equal Dignity; eternal, immutable, independent

pendent on God himſelf, tho' he not ſo on them.

As to the ſyllogiſtical Mode of exerciſing theſe Counterfeits, which is eſteemed the only ſure Way of knowing Truth rationally, it is ſhewing a mere Jugler's Trick with them, and impoſing upon ourſelves.

For let us conſider this mighty Engine Syllogiſm, the working with which is Reaſon.

"A Syllogiſm, we are told, is a Method "of Reaſon or Reaſoning, by which, from "two Propoſitions, that are rightly diſpoſed, "laid down, a third and new Propoſition, "that is different from them both, ariſes, "which is called the Conſequence."

Which to me is all Fallacy and Miſapprehenſion; nor does a Syllogiſm anſwer this Repreſentation, for there is nothing in the Concluſion that is new or different from what was in the Premiſes, nor in the ſecond Propoſition from what was in the firſt, nor in the Term, that is the Subject of the Queſtion, from what was in the predicate or middle Term, but only leſs; and the three Terms, repeated each twice over, raiſe but one and the ſame Idea of one Object; and all the rational Knowledge of Logick is mere λογομαχία, that has no relation to the Nature of Things, or their Differences and Relations to Life; no Diſcoveries of Truth are made or aſſured to the Soul by it, nor any

Ideas

Ideas improved, but it is raiſed upon artificial Signs only, and to know what Ideas by the Laws of their Inſtitution they raiſe, including and comprehending one another. Draw two Circles within each other, and ſay that ſuch a Thing is within the inner, therefore it is within the outer, and you act at once in *rebus*, what all Logical and Syllogiſtical Ratiocination amounts to.

Reaſon therefore, inſtead of being a better Sort of Knowledge than Senſe, is worſe, being the Perception of the ſame Objects in a more degenerate State of Propoſition; it is perceiving that indirectly, diſtortedly, faintly, and obſcurely, that by our Senſes we had perceived before directly, clearly, and more perfectly: But ſee the Dotage of Philoſophy: all theſe Points of natural Inferiority of rational to ſenſible Perception, are turned into Articles of Superiority, its Defects into Refinements and Excellencies; our Senſations are decryed as groſs, their Objects corporeal, their Manner ſimple, eaſy; whilſt the want of Reality to Reaſon's Objects is called Spirituality, the Vanity and Emptineſs of its Ideas is Immateriality, as the Soul's revolving them and tumbling them about is Speculation, its gazing much and ſteadily on the ſame is Contemplation, the Buſtle and to do that there is to make out any Part of rational Knowledge, adds Value to it, and Virtue to the Soul; its Indirection is

dignified

dignified with the Name of Reflexion, as an illuſtrious Title.

The Conveniencies indeed, that rational Knowledge adds to Life, make it juſtly valuable to us, within its due Bounds; but ought not to make it Matter of ſo much Pride, and to run it up to the blaſphemous Height that 'tis now carried to; becauſe, notwithſtanding all its Uſes, it is really an Enſign of Poverty and natural Imperfection; no Man reaſons willingly, or that can help it, or farther than drove to it by Neceſſity; and when reduced to it as by Extremity, as having no other Way to come at the Thing we want to know.

Where Senſe ends and fails, there Reaſon begins; when Things themſelves are no longer preſent, and we cannot directly and immediately perceive them, or the Quality of their Relation to us, by our Organs, then we betake our ſelves to our Logical Weapon, and fall to work upon their Ideas and other Counterfeits, and try that way to tranſact the Affair we have with them; Reaſoning is an After-game, a ſecond Sight ſupplemental to the firſt, and comes in to the Relief of Senſe falling ſhort; as when we cannot reach or come at Things the direct and compendious Way, we contrive by Artifice and Circuition to help out Nature; and as a Child or Dwarf, that, by tacking one thing to another, ſhould make a hard Shift to reach up

to ſomething, that one of common Stature could do without ſuch Trouble, who ſhould vaunt and triumph in the notable Atchievement, not conſidering that it was the want of a proper Degree of Dimenſion, and its natural Littleneſs, that was the Foundation of his Pride; ſo Men, like Children, glory in Reaſoning, as Boys in clambering, and forget, like them, that the Virtue of the Exploit is a Badge of natural Infirmity. The Neceſſity of Reaſon is from the Defect of Underſtanding, (*Neceſſitas rationis ex defectu intellectus, Aquin. 2nda 2ndæ, Q.* 49.); from the Littleneſs of our Being, and its narrow Circumſcription, and the want of real Preſence, (which is the Form of true Knowledge) Reaſon takes its Riſe; the more Occaſion there is for it, the more imperfect is the Being that is obliged to recur ſo much to the Method, and the more uncertain is its Knowledge; nor God, nor Angels, nor any ſuperior Order of Beings, uſe it, yet we pleaſe ourſelves in being like Angels in this Form of Knowledge, that is the remoteſt from theirs, which is by Intuition of the true Objects, not by indirect Viſion thro' Counterfeits; and Mr. *Woollaſton* is ſo far right, tho' not conſiſtently with himſelf, (*Relig. of Nat. Sect.* 3.) when he ſays, that "God is "not obliged to make uſe of our operoſe "Methods by Ideas and Inferences.

So

So when he ſays, "There may be ſome "Beings who are endued with Reaſon, but "have nothing higher than that," he betrays a low Opinion of Reaſon; and more ſo, when he ſays, *Ib.* "All comes to this at "laſt, Truth (or there are Truths which) "may be diſcovered or found out to be ſuch "by Reaſoning."

If the State of Angelical Natures is ſuch, as requires their Knowledge of more Objects than are actually and immediately preſent to them, which is not likely, they muſt bring about that Intuition without our paultry Method of Reaſoning, which muſt ſuppoſe their having Ideas, Memories, and all the petty and mechanical Trumpery that Animals, from Men to Maggots, are furniſhed out withal, to progg for their Subſiſtance. So far as we ſuppoſe Beings ſuperior to our own to have, that is to want, Reaſon, let it be by what Method it will, ſo far we debaſe their Natures, and bring them down to the Level with ourſelves and Fellow-Animals. As a Remedy for the Inconveniencies, which the almoſt perpetual Abſence of many of the important Relations of Life from us, which are neceſſary to our Preſervation, God has given us rational Perception, a Knowledge that is proportioned to our natural Neceſſities indeed, but diſproportion'd to our Exiſtence, and beyond the Bounds of natural and genuine Knowledge, and therefore of a Baſtard Kind,

at a poor and difficult Rate to ſerve the Turn.

To talk, with the aforeſaid *Woollaſton* (*Rel. of Nat. Sect.* 3.) "of ſome ſuperior Method "of Reaſoning, ſuch as perhaps ſome higher "Order of Reaſoners may have, but we "have not," is like blind Men voting their Privation into a Perfection, and talking of ſome ſuperior Method of groping, which ſome higher Order of Gropers may have, but they have not.

Reaſon is a lower and meaner Way of perceiving, and thoſe Refinements and Subtleties of it, which we magnify the moſt, are ſo much the pooreſt, as they are the difficulteſt, and moſt remote from immediate Intuition, each Degree of which makes the Knowledge of ſtill baſer Alloy, as Viſion by ſeveral Reflections grows obſcurer; the Reaſoning that ſhows moſt Art, and is attended with the greateſt Difficulty, ſhows alſo our greater Impotence, and how ſhort our Reach and Sight is, that muſt rear Ladders of ſo many Rims, to reach ſome of the meaner Fruit from the lower Boughs of the Tree of Knowledge; all that elaborate Inquiſition and diſcurſive Inveſtigation, which the Mind tortures itſelf withal, to come at the Sight of ſome abſent Things, and to bring them ſo in View, as to diſcern their Relations to itſelf, or other Beings, is by ſo much the meaner Knowledge, by how much it is the leſs ſimple,

ple, being not what the Excellence, but Impotence, of our State of Being forces us to practiſe and make the beſt of.

It is ridiculous to aſſert, that "the Reports "of Senſe are not of equal Authority with "the clear Demonſtrations of Reaſon, when "they happen to differ, —— and that Rea-"ſon is more certain than Senſe (*Rel. of "Nat. Sect.* 3.)

"And that Reaſon is a much more ſure "and infallible Guide in Matters of Religi-"on, than Senſe is, or can be, in the Affairs "of this Life (*Author of the Plea, &c.*)

For nothing is in the Underſtanding, but what was firſt in the Senſes, and we perceive nothing within us, but the Counterfeits of what we perceived before without us, and the Veracity of our Faculties is the Foundation of our Reaſoning; and to ſay that Reaſon is ſurer than Senſe, is to ſay the Concluſion is ſurer than the Premiſes, and that we are ſurer of Fact than of the Evidence: Our Remembrance of our Experiences are the Subjects of Reaſoning, and our paſt Paſſions from Objects of Senſe are our future Inſtructions, according to which the Will commands Behaviour towards them; when Objects are firſt perceived, and till they have been tried, Reaſon has nothing to ſay about them; the Quality itſelf of the preſent Perception, whether Pleaſure or Pain, gives the Rule by which the Will commands

Averſion

Averſion or Converſion to them; the next time they offer themſelves, the Idea or Remembrance of this Rencounter, gives the ſame Rule: If a Thing really hurt me, and I give back from it, we allow it not to be Reaſon; but if I, remembering this when I meet it again, decline it, marked up by Name of natural Evil, it is then an intellectual Object, and a rational, and no longer a ſenſible Act: Thus we prefer Determinations, founded on Ideas, to thoſe founded on the real and original Objects, our Dreams to our waking Perceptions; for all ideal or rational Perception is but regular and methodical Dream, as Dreaming, properly ſuch, is but looſe and confuſed Reaſoning.

Logical and ſyllogiſtical Reaſoning, I have obſerved, is founded all upon Words, with which it teaches to raiſe Ideas in each other, according to their inſtituted Powers; but then we cannot execute thoſe Powers, but conformably to the State of the natural Exiſtence of the Originals that impreſſed them; we can make indeed monſtrous Conſtitutions, make Centaurs and Chimera's, and compound and divide ſpecifick Forms after ſuch a Manner, as Nature never compounds and divides the Originals; but then we cannot diſſolve fundamental Unions, or divide Nature's eſſential Compoſitions, (if they are Compoſitions) or the Order of natural Dependence of Things on each other, any more in Idea than

we

we can in Reality: Thus we cannot raiſe an Idea of Matter without Form, of Accidents without Subſtance, or Subjects of Inheſion, or of Accidents with thoſe Subjects, without Quality or Circumſtance; and this is the Caſe of abſtract Words or Names, by which we pretend to raiſe the Ideas, and to form Notions and Conceptions of Accidents, drawn off from their Subjects, and in Contradiction to their Nature, to make abſolute and independent Objects of them, and to ſubſtantiate each the minuteſt Circumſtance of Action, Paſſion, or Relation, *&c.*

Abſtract Names are uſeful indeed in our Correſpondence, which abounds with them, wantonly comes new upon every Occaſion, and their ſubſtantive Quality demands Ideas anſwerable to them; but we can no more raiſe ſuch Ideas, than we can do what is naturally impoſſible; for it is not in this Inſtance of Abſtracts only, but in ſeveral others, that we cannot raiſe Ideas anſwerable to the Marks that are inſtituted to raiſe them; for our Ideas, like Nature's Originals that impreſs them, muſt all be in the concrete Form of the Object's Exiſtence only; but what we cannot actually do, (which ſerves the Purpoſe of Correſpondence) we can ſuppoſe by Agreement to be done, and to take for granted as done, till, by conſtant Uſe and Habit, theſe Ideas of Suppoſition ſeem to be real ones to us: And thus we have fooled

fooled ourſelves into the prevailing Conceit of having Ideas in us anſwerable to all the abſtract Marks that we inſtitute, when we neither have, nor can poſſibly have, any ſuch; and ſtrongly poſſeſſed with this Prejudice, and finding no Exemplars in Nature without us, anſwerable to theſe ſuppoſed Ideas to impreſs them, we carry the Folly farther, and abſurdly imagine them to be innate Ideas, inbred Notices of inbred Objects, not derived from our Senſes; ſpecifical Ideas that are not Copies of Things, but Exemplars and eternal Patterns; for it is not enough for us to have theſe imaginary No-Ideas to be real Objects and Things, but they muſt be the top Objects, and intellectual ones; and the Knowledge that ariſes from the Soul's converſing with them, muſt be intellectual Knowledge: Theſe are the chief Subjects of Reaſon, and all rational Truth, that is, all Truth worth the knowing, as they would have it, is what is wrought upon by or with theſe No-Ideas of No-Originals; learned Volumes are writ to vindicate the Reality of theſe Nullities, and their Excellence beyond Objects of Senſe; and to demonſtrate the Immutability and Eternity of a Set of Words as intellectual Objects, whoſe real Exiſtence and Idea is nothing but Noiſe or Figure at laſt; Sciences are raiſed upon them as their Foundation, which at laſt are Objects merely vocal, that have no other

Title

Title to independent Idea, but their grammatical Quality.

Thus the Author of *the Religion of Nature Delineated* makes Truth to be ſyllogiſtick only, an Object ariſing from Propoſitions, and not from Things, and to conſiſt in the Correſpondence of our Ideas to the Signs or Words that are inſtituted to raiſe them; which *Truth is to be diſcovered by Reaſon*, he ſays; which Reaſon is *ſomething different from the Knowledge of Particulars*; that is, it is not the Knowledge of Things in that State in which they really exiſt, but of their Ideas in us, as they are raiſed by Terms of Art; that is, in ſuch a State of Diſunion, as neither Nature's Originals, or their Ideas in us, can be raiſed, or ſo much as conceived to exiſt anſwerably to. *Reaſon*, ſays he, (*Sect.* 3.) *is performed in Species, and a rational Being muſt therefore have ſome of theſe Species, I mean ſpecifical and abſtract Ideas to work with:* And again, *an intelligent Being, among the Objects of his Mind, muſt have ſome that are abſtract*; ſo that theſe real and ideal Nullities, *Abſtracts* and *Species*, are both the Objects about which, and the Tools with which, the Underſtanding performs this high Exerciſe called Reaſon: And again, (*p.* 90.) *in Fact we find within ourſelves many logical, metaphyſical, mathematical Ideas, no one of which is limited to any particular or individual Thing; but they comprehend whole*

Claſſes or Kinds; and *it is by the Help of theſe that we reaſon and demonſtrate, &c.* which, in Fact, is both falſe and fooliſh; and *Reaſon*, according to his Account, is nothing but the Regulation of logical Tittle-tattle; and with our mock and ſham Signs, to raiſe as mock and ſham Ideas in each other, of Objects that are not in Nature in that State, is what our Rationaliſt's both *Reaſon* and Truth conſiſt in; and he that is beſt ſtocked with verbal Counterfeits, Reaſon's chief Tools, and that can play and ſhuffle them over with the greateſt Slight and Dexterity, and turn them into the greateſt Variety of Poſtures, to raiſe their ideal Poppets in others withal, according to philoſophical Compact, is the improved Man of Reaſon, that looks down with Contempt upon Men of Senſe, the reigning Infatuation.

But, 2*dly*, let us conſider how far the Definitions of Reaſon, given by its Advancers to be a ſufficient Guide to us in Religion, juſtly entitle it to thoſe high Aſcriptions which they beſtow upon it, and to that Sufficiency in Conduct in Religion, which they contend for.

Becauſe Definitions of Reaſon by them are ſcarce, I ſhall put down thoſe that I have met withal.

Woollaſton has piled up together an odd Heap of Lumber, which we are to take from him as a Definition or Deſcription of Reaſon.

(*Rel.*

(*Rel. of Nat. &c. Sect.* 3.) "The Power "which any intelligent Being has of ſur- "veying his own Ideas and comparing them, "of forming to himſelf out of thoſe which "are immediate and abſtract, ſuch general "and fundamental Truths, as he can be "ſure of, and of making ſuch Inferences "and Concluſions as are agreeable to them, "or to any other Truth, after it comes to "be known, in order to find out more "Truth, prove or diſprove ſome Aſſertion, "reſolve ſome Queſtion, determine what is "fit to be done upon Occaſion, *&c.* that Caſe "or this under Conſideration being firſt "fairly ſtated and prepared, is what I mean "by the Faculty of Reaſon, and what en- "titles him to the Epithet of rational; or, "in ſhort, Reaſon is a Faculty of making "ſuch Inferences and Concluſions, as are "mentioned under the preceding Propoſition "from any thing known or given."

Author of a Pamphlet, entitled, *The Foundation of Moral Goodneſs, &c.* "Reaſon or "Intelligence is a Faculty, enabling us to "perceive, either immediately or mediately, "the Agreement or Diſagreement of Ideas, "whether natural or moral."

Mr. Chubb, Treatiſe 12*th*, "By Reaſon, "or the reaſoning Faculty, I underſtand "that reflecting Power of the Mind, by "which we are enabled to diſcern and "judge of the Fitneſs and Unfitneſs, of the

" Agreement and Diſagreement, of the Good " or Evil, and of the Truth and Falſhood, " of Things."

Mr. *Chubb*'s Definition is moſt to the preſent Purpoſe, with regard to the Matter in Diſpute, *viz.* Reaſon's Right and Sufficiency to conduct us in Religion, which I ſhall only remark upon; but we muſt obſerve, firſt, that it is an equivocal Name: " By Reaſon, " ſays Mr. *Chubb*, is meant either the Exer- " ciſe of the Underſtanding, or the Object " of it, (*Prev. Q.*) *viz.* the moral Reaſon " and Fitneſs of Things." Between theſe two Significations our Rationaliſts play faſt and looſe, ſometimes ſliding off from one, to juſtify what is ſaid of the other; one is a dead, ſtupid, ſenſeleſs Object in Things without us, without Will, Underſtanding, or Conciouſneſs; which notwithſtanding they load with divine Honours and Attributes, the ſupreme Rule of Rectitude to God's Will and Underſtanding, and in which all the Worſhip and Service due and payable to him ultimately terminates, and, paſſing thro' him, redounds to it.

The other, which he calls *the Exerciſe of the Underſtanding*, is that which the above-cited Definitions relate to, of which high and mighty Things are alſo given out; as that which in Dignity and Excellence of Nature excels objective Reaſon, as living and conſcious Beings do thoſe that want that Perfection;

Perfection ; and as it is conſtituted to us the infallible Judge, as well of the eternal Fitneſſes of Things, as of the Conformity of the divine Actions to thoſe Fitneſſes, with which, as often as it finds them to diſagree, it abſolves itſelf from Duty and Obedience to the divine Will and Commands.

Their telling us that Reaſon is the Exerciſe of the Underſtanding, does not well agree with our Philoſophy, concerning the Nature of that Principle, which does not allow it to have, or to be capable of any Exerciſe at all, which is agreed to be a paſſive Power ; (*intelligentia eſt paſſiva potentia*) and (*intelligere eſt pati*) to underſtand is not to do, but ſuffer ; not to act, but be acted upon (*Aquin.*) and whatever Activity is in the Soul, lies in the Will, the Spring of Action and Motion.

And telling us that it is a *Faculty*, is a Term that Mr. *Locke* excepts againſt, (*Chap. of Power*) as repreſenting it as a diſtinct Agent or Principle of Action, exiſting in the Soul as its Subject, as a kind of Part of the Whole.

Nor does it clear up its Nature to us at all ; for we know as well what Reaſon is, as what a Faculty is.

A Faculty is a way of acting with Facility ; and Seeing, hearing, *&c.* are not only Faculties as good, and of as high Extraction as Reaſon, but more properly Faculties, as anſwering

anſwering much better the Character of acting with Facility, which is but ſeldom Reaſon's Caſe.

Nor is its being a reflecting Faculty or Power an Advantage to it, above ſenſible Perception, if it really had ſuch a Power, which it has not; ſince what we call Reflection, is but practiſing the ſame Perception upon preſent Counterfeits, that we had practiſed by our Organs on the preſent Originals before; for we can no more by our Reaſon than by our Senſes perceive more than what is really preſent; by our Senſes we perceive the Originals preſent to us, by our boaſted Reflection we only ſee thoſe Objects in Idea and Effigie, in like manner preſent to us; but by one Way perceiving no more than t'other, can we perceive what is abſent, diſtant, paſt, or to come; and is a Power of perceiving ever the better, becauſe it is of the Copy and not the Original? *Senſibility ſeems as diſtinct from the Underſtanding, as the Underſtanding is from the Will*, ſays an Author I have quoted before; and yet all this Diſtinction lies in the State of the Object's Propoſition to the Soul, perceiving them at firſt or ſecond-hand, ſeeing Things with our Eyes open, and then ſeeing more faintly with them ſhut: As Objects well or ill affect us, we put our Marks upon them, to know how to deal with them the next Time; call them fit

or

or unfit, Good or Evil, *&c.* which are but Names given to our ſenſible Experiences of them; which Names or Marks, as often as they come round to us, attend their Remembrance, and make Part of their Idea, and from natural are thereby changed to intellectual and moral, Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, rational Diſcernment, and all that.

Thus the true Object is decry'd as groſs and material, the Impreſſion preferred to the Seal, only for being ſtruck on leſs obvious Materials; where Senſe lays the Foundation, Reaſon can go on, and proſecute in Idea, otherwiſe not. What can a Man born blind or deaf do, by his reflecting Power, towards enabling him to diſcern and judge of Colours or Sounds? Some of his other Senſes may lend him their Objects as Foundation, on which, as awkard Counterfeits, after a wild and imperfect Manner, he may exerciſe Diſcernment, but his Reaſon can never ſet him right in any juſt Notion of the Things whoſe Names he hears of; and a Child of a Year old has a juſter Notion of Sight and Colours, and knows them with greater Propriety, than any blind Profeſſor can do with all his Rationality, who ſolves their *Phænomena* with the greateſt Clearneſs: Thus it is when the Mind pretends to ſtrike Light to itſelf in Religion, and to diſcern its fundamental Objects by its Reaſon, unleſs Authority

rity and divine Revelation give it a proper Foundation to proceed upon.

Rational Knowledge is not fundamental, it is all Conſequence and Superſtructure only; it does not find out Subjects, but deſcants upon them pre-conceived and granted: Let a Man born blind reaſon never ſo juſtly about Colours, yet all his Reaſon would never have made him aware, that there were any ſuch Objects in Nature, and all his rational Knowledge ſtands at laſt upon Faith and Teſtimony; for where by our Senſes we have no immediate Notice of original Subjects, it muſt be by Authority only that we can know that there are ſuch; and as the Notice of ſuch Originals can only be conveyed to us by inſtituted Signs and Counterfeits, raiſing in us the Ideas, not of the unknown Originals themſelves, but of ſome other Originals, by Analogy to which we are to conceive them; ſo both our fundamental Knowledge of ſuch Originals, ſtanding upon the Juſtice of the Signs, as well as of the Analogy, as that alſo of the Conſequences from them, muſt be very imperfect. Mr. *Chubb* therefore, in his aforeſaid Treatiſe, very unjuſtly and unskilfully marks out the Boundaries of the Provinces of Reaſon and Faith, *There are ſome Things in Reaſon's Province*, ſays he, *and Faith has nothing to do with them*; " ſuch as the firſt " Propoſition in Religion, *viz.* that there is

" a

" a God. When we would ſatisfy our " Minds of the Truth of this Propoſition, " we conſult our reflecting, reaſoning Fa- " culty, as the only Means to obtain that " Satisfaction by; becauſe, to pretend to " ſeek Satisfaction from the written Word of " God, is to take the Thing for granted that " we ſeek for, *viz.* that there is a God; " we muſt firſt be perſuaded that God is, " before we can be perſuaded that he has " any Revelation for us to ſeek Satisfaction " from."

Mr. *Chubb* could not have pitched upon a more unfortunate Inſtance of a Thing in Reaſon's Province, than this *firſt Propoſition in Religion, that there is a God*; to ſatisfy Men of the Truth of which, *conſulting their reflecting reaſoning Faculty, is ſo far from being the only Means*, that it is no Means at all: For tho' what he ſays is ſo far true, that to ſeek that Satisfaction from the written Word of God, by thoſe that admit it to be his written Word, is to take the Thing for granted that is ſought for, and that we muſt believe that there is a God, before we can believe that he has revealed himſelf; and tho' it is true that Revelation is given to direct Believers, and not to convert Atheiſts; nor does there appear, thro' the whole Scripture, that any divine Meſſenger was employed, by Writing, Preaching, or Miracle, to confirm the Truth of that Propoſition,

that there is a God, or prove or declare it to Mankind; but that is ſuppoſed ſtill as a Thing not wanted, and that need not, or ſhould not be attempted; for if God made it not an Article in the Commiſſions of thoſe who executed his Revelations, to offer to Mankind any Convictions or Declarations of his Being; I do not ſee why over-forward Men ſhould, of their own Heads, break thro' the Pattern, and ſet up Undertakers without Command or Precedent, to do with their impertinent Reaſons, what he has neither required or encouraged; and which Reaſon at laſt has nothing in Nature to do withal, that can prove the Being of no one original Object in Nature, that can act upon no Subject, but by Pre-conceſſion of its Exiſtence.

Mr. *Chubb*'s Receipt for the Conviction of Atheiſts, and the Method he preſcribes for it, is very extraordinary.

Firſt, Here are Gentlemen that we are to ſuppoſe to be Atheiſts, and want to be ſatisfied that there is a God; well, and what are they to do to obtain this Satisfaction? Why, *they are to conſult this their reflecting reaſoning Faculty, as the only Means to obtain this Satisfaction by; becauſe, to pretend to ſeek it from the written Word of God, is to take the Thing for granted that is ſought for.* Now we muſt ſuppoſe theſe diſcontented Perſons to be at Years of Diſcretion, well qualified

qualified to exerciſe their reaſoning Faculty, and who begun not then firſt to exerciſe it upon this Subject when they found themſelves diſſatisfied: their being ſo tells us what they had been doing before, and what had brought them into their Atheiſtical Condition; for we cannot well ſuppoſe that they were born of Atheiſtical Parents, or in a Land of Salvages that acknowledge no ſupreme Being. A rare Misfortune! Or that they drew it from Prejudice of Education, or Cuſtom of their Country; theſe we may well ſuppoſe all ſtood againſt them in their Way to Atheiſm, much leſs that they had it from the Scriptures; but it muſt be from their own Reaſon only, which had driven their Disbelief thro' theſe and all other Obſtacles, both of Nature (*quo omnes duce natura ferimur. Tully*) and of Inſtitution: And now what is to be done to ſatisfy them that *there is a God*, but to ſend them back to conſult their old Tutor, and that had debauched and ſhocked their Faith, and wrought in them the Disbelief or Doubt of God's Being? And in a Chriſtian Country, and ours eſpecially, where Mr. *Chubb* lays his Scene, the Belief of this Propoſition is ſo early and ſtrongly implanted by univerſal Conſent, by Inſtitution, and the Sanction of Laws, is ſo mixed up with human Actions, and grows up ſo together with the Principles of Nature, that, without Reaſon's Aſſiſtance, this

Foundation of common Faith is ſo ſtrongly wrought into and eſtabliſhed in the Soul, by all the Authorities that can create Perſuaſion, that nothing but the moſt unequal Weight of Reaſon and Argument, and Superiority of Evidence on the other Side, can be preſumed to ſhock a Faith ſo eſtabliſhed, that had but tolerable Reaſons to balance thoſe againſt it, backed with ſuch Authority of all Kinds added to them.

Reaſon is never conſulted ſo early upon this Subject, but it finds Faith in Poſſeſſion; and if any Man is diſſatisfied whether there is a God, it is his Reaſon that has diſſatisfied him, that found him otherwiſe; not by innate Idea, but by inſtitutional Prolepſis, and Anticipation from Authority; it is its nonſenſical Meddlings with what it has nothing to do withal, that, notwithſtanding its own Balance on t'other Side, and all the Advantages that ſupport it, tempt him to Disbelief. And how likely it is, that what had diſturbed the Quiet of the Foundation of Religion ſo ſtrongly laid in him, and that could not preſerve him from degenerating into a Brute and Fool, infamous in the Eyes of all his Fellow-Creatures, ſhould reduce him to Faith and Religion again, is eaſy to ſee. If Men believe the Scripture to be the written Word of God, they believe that there is a God, and are not the Men Mr. *Chubb* preſcribes to: And if Men are not ſatisfied that

there

there is a God; if the Works of Nature, if the Obſervation of common Providences, if the univerſal Conſent of Mankind, perpetuated by Tradition from the earlieſt Ages, cannot ſatisfy them, I do not ſee what remains to recommend them to, to give them Satisfaction, but the Scriptures? How do Men ſatisfy themſelves of the Truth of any Exiſtent, but by its revealing and manifeſting itſelf to them; and for want of ſuch Self-manifeſtation by the Teſtimony of thoſe to whom it has manifeſted itſelf? and can God only, if he is, not manifeſt himſelf to us that Way, that each of his Creatures does it! Why ſhould not God, by his Word, ſatisfy thoſe that doubt of it, that he is; as well as by his Works of Nature? Effects of the divine Power and Wiſdom may convince us of their Cauſe one Way as well as another; and why may not the Scripture convince Men, that conſult and conſider it, that it is the Word of God by internal and external Evidence, as well as the Order and natural Conſtitution of Things, that they are his Work?

Let the Scripture be ſuppoſed not to be the inſpired Word of God, by thoſe who ſeek that Satisfaction in it, but to ſtand upon the Foot of common Hiſtory; yet, under that Character, it as effectually aſſures us that there is a God, as any antient Hiſtories can, that there were ſuch Perſons and ſuch

Things

Things done as they ſpeak of, and ſuch Men as their Authors; if a Man is not ſatisfied that there is a God, let him look on the Scripture as a national Chronicle only, and it muſt give him that Satisfaction, unleſs he will ſuppoſe that a Set of Hiſtorians, that ſucceeded each other in writing upon the ſame Subject for near two thouſand Years together, writ all the ſame Lies and Fiction to abuſe their Country, and their Country, thro' ſo many Generations, never found it out, nor ſo much as ſuſpected the Truth of any Part; let Men think of *Moſes*'s Chronology before his own Time as they will, the Record of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Building of *Babel*, his Genealogy of Men from *Adam* to his own Time, *&c.* yet we muſt ſtill be aſſured from him that there is a God, unleſs we will disbelieve, not only all that he ſaw and was preſent to, but the Miracles that he himſelf did; and if Men will deny the Truth of thoſe Miracles that he himſelf did publickly in the Sight of the Sun, and two great Nations, they may as juſtly deny that he gave any ſuch Laws as thoſe related by him to the *Jews*, and that there ever was ſuch a Man as *Moſes*, ſuch a People as the *Jews*, ſuch a Land as that of *Ægypt*, or ſuch a Sea as the Red one; and by the ſame Rule they ought to deny the Truth of all the Facts, not only that the *Greek* or *Roman* Hiſtorians relate from Hearſay

Hearſay and Information, but what themſelves ſay they did, and were Eye-witneſſes to, whoſe Writings breathe not a Spirit of Truth and Simplicity, equal to that of the ſacred Records; and he that will not believe that God is the Author of the Scriptures, if he leave but a Page of Truth ſtanding in them, muſt yet from them believe that there is one to be the Author of them.

The ſecond Part of Mr. *Chubb*'s Definition of Reaſon, conſiſts of an Enumeration of the Particulars that it can do.

It enables Men to diſcern and judge of the Fitneſs and Unfitneſs, the Agreement and Diſagreement of the Good and Evil, and of the Truth and Falſhood of Things.

That Men can do all this is certain; but that theſe Acts are either Properties and Prerogatives of Reaſon, or conſtitute Religion, I do not ſee; Beaſts that have no Reaſon make theſe ſame Diſcernments, and make the ſame Uſe of the Senſe and Remembrance of the Relations of Things to them, that conſtitute thoſe Diſtinctions of fit, unfit, *&c.* that we do: And if acting agreeably to thoſe Relations, and to the natural Conveniencies and Inconveniencies that attend them, be moral Action, they act alſo morally; and if moral Action be religious Action, they are alſo entitled to be religious Creatures as well as we; which being falſe, we muſt conſequently

quently make Religion to be ſomething more than moral Action, or the acting agreeably to the Reaſon and Nature of Things, and that it is the Knowledge of God by divine Revelation, which Revelation he has not vouchſafed to any of the Animal Tribes, but to Man alone; and acting agreeably to the *Fitneſs* and *Unfitneſs*, *Good* and *Evil of Things*, not from natural Diſcernment of thoſe Relations common to both, but from the Knowledge of his divine Will, by its Determinations making thoſe, or which elſe he pleaſes, to be Rules of Duty and Service, poſitively preſcribed by him.

There never was a fairer Time to expect to find Examples in of the Sufficiency of Reaſon, and what they call the Light of Nature, to conduct Men in Religion, nor more favourable to produce Inſtances to the Advantage of their Conduct, than about the Time of our Saviour's Birth, and the Promulgation of the Goſpel; never had Mankind leſs need of Revelation than then, when moral Philoſophy was in greater Perfection than ever it had been before, and the Light of Nature and Reaſon ſhone out in their greateſt Purity and Exaltation; and never were fairer Sets of Men to find the Inſtances and Examples of that Sufficiency amongſt, than the *Greeks* and *Romans* were at that Time, and particularly thoſe of the very Cities that St. *Paul* writes his Epiſtles to, or

acquaints

acquaints us with the State of Religion amongſt them at that Time, *viz. Athens, Rome, Epheſus, Corinth, &c.* that yet all his Accounts agree in Repreſentations highly reflecting on the Sufficiency of Reaſon, and the Light of Nature, their Conductors; for there was hardly that Vice or Immorality, that was not ſanctified into a Piece of acceptable Worſhip, ſolemnly and publickly paid to ſome falſe God, without Recoil of natural Conſcience; hardly that Virtue, the Character of whoſe being ſo was univerſally acknowledged, or eſtabliſhed by Sanction and Authority, that was effectual to work Conviction of Obligation to its Practice, or even Acknowledgment. And firſt for *Athens*, that Eye of *Greece*, as *Greece* was of the World, the great School of Wiſdom and Philoſophy at that Time, where human Life in Religion, under the Conduct of Reaſon, deſtitute of Revelation, was at the beſt to beſure: ἐυσεβέστεροι (*Grot.*) *in cultu deorum omnes ſuperarunt*; that they excelled the World in Religion, was their acknowledged Character, and none pretended to vie with them in the Worſhip of the Gods; but this Part of the World took it from them as Patterns; unleſs ſome one will name where, either then, or at any other Time, or in any other Place, it was better; yet here St. *Paul*, we find, when he came there, was ſurprizingly ſhock'd with Emotions of Pity and Indignation, and

charitable Concern at the melancholy Spectacle; (*Acts* xvii. 16.) his Spirit *was ſtirred in him, when he ſaw the City wholly given to Idolatry, full of Idols, and of Idols Temples*, ſo very full, that you might *find a God in it ſooner than a Man, 'tis ſaid.* I have met with Computations how many Gods they had; but I have forgot, only that there were abundance of them, and more than thoſe of all *Greece* beſides; *too ſuperſtitious*, or ſuperſtitious to an uncommon Degree, and this too not in ſome, *but in all Things*; to ſee ſuch a venerable Collection of blind philoſophical Deiſts, the Top of whoſe religious Knowledge was to worſhip *the unknown God, and that too as ignorantly*; to worſhip they knew neither who, nor what, nor how, having juſt Light enough to ſee that they were in the Dark, and had neither Diſcernment nor Ability to ſet themſelves righter, of which the Apoſtle convicts them, by the Teſtimony of their own publick Act and Monument, their *Altar inſcribed to the unknown God*; and his whole Sermon ſuppoſes them ignorant, not only of the one and the true God, but of his eſſential Nature and Form; that he is not corporeal, *like to Silver, Gold, &c. (v. 29.)* that he dwelleth *not in Temples made with Hands*; ignorant of his Works, *that he made the World, and all Things therein*; of his Worſhip, that *he is not worſhipped with Mens Hands*; of our natural

Dependence

Dependence upon him, that *in him we live, and move, and have our being*; and as common to them, with the reſt of the Gentile World; that he was an Object that they had loſt Sight of; that they might ſeek, if *happily they might feel after him*, and find him, like blind Men groping in the Dark, which unhappily they never had the Luck to do; or would they, tho' *not far from every one of us*, to heighten the Misfortune, and aggravate the Incapacity ſtill the more.

The State of Deiſm therefore at *Athens*, at that Time, notwithſtanding they were now enlightened by their *Socrates*, the Founder of moral Philoſophy, and their *Ariſtotle*, *&c.* and by other famous Profeſſors and Sect-maſters, as well before, as after them, both living and dead, yet was by no means to the Honour of Reaſon, and the Light of Nature, their Conductors; and thoſe Platonick and Socratick Doctrines and Notions, that now ſo enlighten our preſent Set of Infidels at this Diſtance of Time and Place, and that they have never done with, and wear thread-bare with quoting them to us, as Inſtances of the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature for our Guide in Religion, that they pride themſelves and glory in, and which our Anti-Revelationiſts propoſe as Patterns to form Notions and human Actions in Religion by, yet had wrought, we find, no Convictions or Converſions me-

morable, or Reformations to any Purpoſe, not even in the Country and Cities where theſe Miracles of Nature themſelves taught and inſtructed, neither by their living Lectures joined with their Examples, nor with their ſo celebrated Works after they were dead; but groſs Idolatry and Superſtition, Atheiſm and religious Ignorance, reigned ſtill as much, as if no ſuch Men had ever been eſteemed or lived amongſt them; and this too in thoſe next ſucceeding Ages, when the *Athenians* were come to themſelves, and are pretended to have paid to their Works and their Memories, all the Deference and Admiration that they had denied to them alive.

From *Athens* let us paſs to *Rome*, and ſee what Account the Apoſtle gives us of the State of Religion there.

As to the ſpeculative and doctrinal Parts of Religion, we can expect to find nothing there, more or better than we have found at *Athens*, becauſe they derived all their philoſophical Precepts and religious Inſtitutes from the *Greeks*, and particularly from *Athens*; and their greateſt Men that make ſuch a Noiſe and Figure, their *Tully*'s, and their *Seneca*'s, were but as Pupils to ſome *Grecian* Maſter or Tutor of that Sect, that their Inclination led them to liſt themſelves in, the Stoick, Academick, or Epicurean; and either went themſelves, according to Mode,

Mode, to *Athens*, to profecute what they called their Studies, or attended their Lectures at *Rome* as publick or private Profeſſors and Tutors; and they are no better than Plagiaries, if they pretend to advance any Notions or Principles as new, and as their own.

But what if all were as they would have it? what if ſome old *Grecians* ſeem to have thought tolerably right and worthily of God, and ſome *Romans*, from them, had the like juſt Apprehenſions of the divine Being, and the Manner of worſhipping him, and gave out good moral Leſſons for the Regularity of Life, the Government of Paſſions, *&c.* which never took Place in Life, ſo far as to be commonly known or publickly taught, much leſs univerſally practiſed as the Rule of Life, but were as academick Qualifications amongſt us, confined to the Schools of Philoſophers, acquired by Study at *Athens*, or elſewhere, by Perſons only of Figure, Leiſure, and Fortune? yet this comes up but to poor Evidence, for the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature and Reaſon to conduct Mankind in Religion, upon ſuch Terms that excluded the Body of Mankind in all Ages, that muſt ſtand as Exception, if this were the Rule: What if once upon a Time a teſty paſſionate old Man in *Greece*, by the Help of a Demon, if he lied not, at his Elbow, that practiſed and taught diſſembling, and owned

owned himſelf an *Ideot* at the ſame time, hit his Way pretty right in Morality and Religion, for which he is cried up ever ſince as a Wonder of a Man, as doing a Thing that was next to impoſſible; muſt this ſingle Inſtance demonſtrate the Sufficiency of Reaſon to be all Mankinds Guide in Religion, againſt Cities, Empires, and Kingdoms in all Ages exemplifying the contrary? And the Glory even of this little Triumph is took off from Nature and Reaſon, by Acknowledgments from themſelves, or their Friends for them, whence this imperfect Light came; that all that they thought Right, was but ſome Scraps of the Moſaick Revelation, from thoſe they called barbarous, which roving about for Light, and ſome to lead them, ſome *Grecian* Philoſophers had the good Luck to pick up in their Travels, either from the *Jews* themſelves, where Providence had ſcattered them, tho' cloſe and niggardly Keepers of revealed Truth, or from *Ægypt* and their neighbouring Nations, what had taken Air.

But let us hear the Religion of Nature *delineated* by St. *Paul*, as it ſtood as well amongſt the *Romans*, in thoſe Days of its greateſt Perfection, as in the whole Gentile World beſide; for tho' it is the Religion and moral Behaviour of *Rome* more particularly, that he in his Epiſtle to the *Romans* deſigns to deſcribe, and not to make a common

mon Draught of Ethnicism; yet that he might fix so many foul Characters upon them with the more Address and Prudence, and shew them themselves with less Offence, by not making them to be worse than all the World beside, he makes his Representation in the third Person, *they*, *them*, instead of *you*; we cannot well suppose Men to be in a worse Condition than St. *Paul* in this Chapter represents the *Romans*, that yet were in a better than the rest of the Gentile World, with regard to every Part of Religion, in the critical Time too, when they were in the best. By Appeal made to themselves, we find that they neither knew God rightly, nor as they ought, and might have done, by various Revelations of himself, (*v.* 17, 18, 19, 20.) nor worshipped and glorified him as known God, or were thankful to him answerably to the imperfect Degree of their Knowledge of him, (*v.* 21.) *professing themselves to be*, i. e. *with Philosophers, they became Fools*; *v.* 22. where we find that his Description is not designed of the low and meaner Part of the People, but reaches the Learned and Philosophical also, as does that also of the *Corinthians*, from 1 *Cor.* i. 20. *Where is the Wise, where is the Scribe, where is the Disputer of this World?*

Nay, he charges the Degeneracy on Philosophy itself, particularly; *for after that in the Wisdom of God, the World by Wisdom knew*

knew not God; they thought Folly to be Wiſdom, and Wiſdom to be Folly; *became vain in their Imaginations*, by indulging too much their idle Speculations, and ſpecious Ratiocinations; they confounded the little Reaſon they had, forſaking God, and forſaken of him, *changing the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image like to corruptible Man*, (29, &c.) *his Truth into a Lie*, (25) *they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge*, (28.) *and God* therefore *gave them up to a reprobate Mind*; he withdrew his Grace from them, and left them to their own perverſe Sentiments; upon which followed their *being filled with all Unrighteouſneſs*, and falling headlong into all thoſe enormous Immoralities that he gives a Catalogue of, *viz.* "Fornication, Wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs, "Maliciouſneſs, full of Envy, Murder, De- "bate, Deceit, Malignity; Whiſperers, "Backbiters, Haters of God, deſpiteful; "proud Boaſters, Inventors of evil Things, "diſobedient to Parents, without Under- "ſtanding, Covenant-breakers, without na- "tural Affection, implacable, unmerciful, "who, knowing (in ſome Meaſure) the "Judgment of God, (that they which com- "mit ſuch Things are worthy of Death) not "only do the ſame, but have Pleaſure in "them that do them."

As to this View of the State of Religion amongſt the *Romans*, under the Conduct of Reaſon

Reaſon and the Light of Nature that is given us by St. *Paul* here, we may obſerve, 1*ſt*, That if the Hiſtory of thoſe Times did not confirm to us the Truth of all the Particulars of his Charge, yet even ſuch as do not believe the divine Authority of the Scriptures, muſt yet conclude it to be a true and fair Account given; nor can we ſuppoſe or ſuſpect, that out of Prejudice or Deſign, the better to make way for Chriſtianity, he heightens the religious Deformities of the heathen Eſtate beyond the real Truth of Things, and makes Things worſe with them than they actually were; becauſe he writes to thoſe very Men who themſelves were the Parties concerned, and the Repreſentation is an Appeal to thoſe who knew full well, and ſaw how Things were, and how they had been amongſt them; and he muſt have given his new Converts a very odd Opinion, as well of the Chriſtian Cauſe, as of his own Sincerity, had he charged them with Crimes beyond Truth and Juſtice.

2*dly*, We may obſerve, that all this religious Degeneracy and Corruption, both Doctrinal and Practical, was from want of proper Rule, and ſufficient Means to know and do better; or elſe from want of Authority and Obligation, and Sanction ſufficient to encourage them to be better, or to deter them from their Impieties and Immoralities; for had it not been ſo, there would have

been no Occaſion for the Apoſtle to have introduced a new Rule amongſt them, or to have opened a new Scene of Terms of Acceptance with God, but to have attempted their Reformation the philoſophical Way, by putting them in mind of their Rule, and reducing them to it, and inſtead of preaching Jeſus and the Reſurrection, to have preached the Sufficiency of their own Reaſon, and the Light of Nature to conduct them, and to have called only for greater Attention to thoſe excellent Guides.

From *Rome* let us paſs to *Epheſus*, a City that was famed for Philoſophers and learned Men; it was the Birth-place of *Heraclitus*, and, as ſome ſay, of *Pythagoras* too, who had abundance of Followers here, as *Plato* alſo had; at the prevailing Errors of whom St. *Paul* is obſerved particularly to ſtrike in this Epiſtle. And what was the State of Religion in this polite and cultivate City? The top Object of their Worſhip *was the great Goddeſs Diana*, we find, and the Image that fell down from *Jupiter*, (*Acts* xix.) *whom not only they, but all* Aſia *and the World worſhipped:* And the practical Part of their Religion was of a Piece with the doctrinal; for thus, we cannot ſuppoſe to reproach, but to congratulate them, upon their Converſion to Chriſtianity, the Apoſtle addreſſes himſelf to them, (*Chap.* ii. *v.* 1, *&c.*) "You hath "he quickened, who (in your Gentile "Eſtate)

" Eſtate) were dead in Treſpaſſes, wherein, " in Time paſt, ye walked according to the " Courſe of this World, according to the " Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spi- " rit that now worketh in the Children of " Diſobedience, among whom we alſo had " our Converſation in Times paſt in the " Luſts of our Fleſh, and of the Mind, and " were by Nature Children of Wrath, even " as others." To prevent their reſenting from him his loading them with an odious Character, he makes himſelf to be one of the Number.

Ver. 11, 12.) " Wherefore that ye being " in Times paſt Gentiles, —— that at that " Time ye were without Chriſt, having no " Hope, and (ἄθεοι) without God in the " World."

And *Chap.* iv. *v.* 17, 18.) " This I ſay " therefore and teſtify in the Lord, that ye " henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, " in the Vanity of their Mind, having the " Underſtanding darkened, alienated from the " Life of God, thro' the Ignorance that is " in them, becauſe of the Blindneſs of their " Heart, who, being paſt feeling, have " given themſelves over to work all Uncleaneſs " neſs with Greedineſs."

And let us hear what Account he gives of the *Corinthians*, (1 *Ep.* xii. 2.) *Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto theſe dumb Idols even as ye were led.* And as for

their Morals, how much they were addicted to Drunkenneſs and Fornication, the Pains that he takes to wean them from them, and convince them of their being unlawful, and the Example of the Perſon guilty of Inceſt in the higheſt Degree by marrying his Mother, without their expreſſing any Horror or Concern at it, but rather glorying in it, may ſhow us; ſo noted they were for Lewdneſs and Whores, that it was thought no Scandal to have it amongſt their publick Prayers, that the Gods would increaſe the Number of their Harlots; and ſome publick-ſpirited religious Patriots made Vows to their Gods to be Benefactors to their Country this Way, by importing foreign Harlots as publick Bleſſings, (*Ælian. Athenenſ.*) their eſteeming Whores the moſt religious Order of their Community, and as thoſe that had the greateſt Intereſt with their Gods; ſo that when publick Supplications were to be made for the greateſt Matters, their Courtezans were made Choice of as Interceſſors, as upon the *Perſian* Invaſion therefore, the Whores were employed, as the ſureſt Cards, to make publick Supplications for the Safety of *Greece*, who were their Veſtal Virgins: Yet this was one of the chief Seats of Learning, and one of the moſt polite and philoſophical Cities of the World at this Time, and had been ſo: *Periander*, one of the ſeven wiſe Men ſo called, was their Prince; much frequented

it

it was by the greateſt Philoſophers; *Diogenes* had been very converſant among them, and the Debaucheries before-mentioned ſeem founded on the Stoical and Epicurean Doctrines.

And how it was amongſt the *Coloſſians*, the Apoſtle likewiſe reminds them, *Chap.* i. *v.* 10. by his praying for their being *fruitful in every good Work, and increaſing in the Knowledge of God*, implying a great Defect, both in the Practick and Theoretick of Religion; by their *being delivered from the Power of Darkneſs*, (*v.* 13.) a State of efficacious Blindneſs and Ignorance; and (*v.* 21.) *and you that were ſometimes alienated, and Enemies (viz. to God) in your Mind by wicked Works.*

So of the *Theſſalonians*, (1 *Theſſ.* iv. 5.) *not in the Luſt of Concupiſcence, even as the Gentiles which know not God*; and St. *Peter* of the Gentiles, *as the Gentiles which know not God.* But here we ſhall be told, that we look for Inſtances of the Sufficiency of Reaſon and the Light of Nature to conduct Men in Religion, both as to Doctrine and Practice, in the wrong Place, and amongſt the wrong Sort of Folks; we muſt not expect to find them in the Crowd, or in common Life, but we muſt go to the Philoſophers, conſult their Lives and Books for them.

Well,

Well, ſuppoſe then it is to be tried by them, let us now hear how it ſtood amongſt theſe celebrated Maſters of the Religion of Nature.

1*ſt*, They all complied with the ſeveral Idolatries and Superſtitions that prevailed in their Countries; and inſtead of attempting any Reformation, taught others alſo to do the like, as their Duty; ſo not only encouraged Men by their Example, but confirmed them by Precept in their Errors and Impieties. (*Aug. de ver. Rel. Cap.* 1.) *Sacra templa omnes habebant communia*, all went to the ſame common Temples, and uſed the ſame common Forms of Worſhip, and had the ſame Gods, and uſed the ſame Rites and Ceremonies; ſo that if they knew better, they profeſſed, they practiſed, they taught publickly, what they privately condemned at the ſame time; they deſpiſed what they worſhipped, and laughed at their own Devotions, and God's too; and what viler Immorality can there be, than to live on thus in a ſettled Courſe of ſuch Diſſimulation; for a Set of Men that valued themſelves for being wiſer than others, and that were, or ought to have been, the Teachers of the People, to follow, or rather to lead them into Idolatries, and the Immoralities conſequent upon it, and to ſtrengthen them in them, by all the Marks of publick Approbation? to whom all thoſe Impieties therefore were imputable,

putable, that they joined with them in the Commiſſion of, or encouraged them in. What Virtue can ſuch a Set of Men pretend to, or what ſignified it to ſay, as ſome of them did, that they did not think of their Gods, as the Vulgar thought; that they had a Key to their Mythology, and ſaw hidden Meanings thro' it; their Religion was that of Nature, and they worſhipped what was intended by thoſe hieroglyphical Names and Figures, that were Objects of Religion to the common People, as by *Jupiter* they meant the Air, by *Neptune* the Sea, by *Vulcan*, Fire, *&c.* for this was but ſtill fixing the Charge of Idolatry upon themſelves ſo much more clearly: The better they underſtood their Mythology, the viler Idolaters ſtill they were; for the Vulgar worſhipped ſomething, which they thought however to be divine and ſupernatural, tho' it was nothing; but the Philoſophers worſhipped the Parts of Nature which the others ſaw were not divine: The better they underſtood what it was which they worſhipped, ſo much their Idolatry was fooliſher than that of the Vulgar; and the Reaſons for the Compliances of theſe ſo good Philoſophers with the Idolatries of their Countries, inſtead of being an Apology, is a further Charge upon them, which were Paſſions very unbecoming Philoſophers; ſuch as, firſt, Pride, Envy, and Malignity. If they really knew

better than they professed, yet it was as a Law amongst them, that none but themselves should be the better or wiser for it, to keep it all within themselves, by industrious Concealment, and not to lay it open to the World by a publick Communication of it; hence *Thales* advises *Phericydes*, who he heard was designing to publish the Mysteries of Divinity to the *Greeks*, to communicate them only to his Friends, and not expose them to the Vulgar: (*Diog. Laert.*) *Pythagoras* injoined his Scholars Silence; and *Aristophanes* (*nubes*) shews it to have been the Law of *Socrates*'s School,

ὃ θέμις πλὴν τοῖς μαθετᾶισιν λέγειν.

"It is not lawful for us to let any but "Scholars into what we know." And *Plato* was so very jealous lest his Doctrines should become common, that he did not care to trust *Phedrus* out of his Sight, for fear he should divulge his secret Lectures, and let People into the Mysteries of his Knowledge; and *odi prophanum vulgus & arceo*, spoke the Spirit of Philosophy.

Or, 2*dly*, Fear and Cowardice; they looked upon it as a bold and dangerous Attempt, so durst not undeceive the People, and tell them the Truth, (*Joseph. against App.* and *Grot. de ver. Rel. Christ. Lib.* 2.) hence making the Rule of Religion to be whatever

whatever was publickly received; and *Grotius* there obſerves, that *Plato*, in his *Timæus*, and elſewhere, and *Porphyrius* quoting the Words from *Euſebius*, Evangelical Preparation, ſaid, that *it was a dangerous Thing to tell the People Truth in Religion*; and *Juſtin Martyr*, in his *Pareneſis*, takes Notice of this alſo in *Plato*, *who, when he ſays that it was impoſſible to let the People into the Knowledge of the true God*, ſhews us that the Impoſſibility lay in his own Cowardice; which thoſe Perſons ſeem to have known, who, upon his attempting ſome new Thing, put him in mind of *Socrates*'s Cup, (*Diog. Laert.*) as *Seneca*, from the ſame Spirit, throws the ſame Cloak over their vile Compliances with the faſhionable Idolatries and Superſtitions of the Times, when, ſpeaking of Religion, he ſays, *quæ omnia ſapiens ſervabit tanquam legibus juſta, non tanquam diis grata.* "All "which Things a Man that is wiſe (or a "true Philoſopher) will obſerve, not as "Things acceptable to the Gods, but as "eſtabliſhed as it were, and commanded by "the Laws:" And *Tully* often hints at this Reaſon, (*De nat. Deo.*) and *Socrates* himſelf, to ward againſt Danger, was a great Sacrificer, and Obſerver of religious Rites; and *Plato* makes *ſacrificing according to the Law*, (that is, Cuſtom of the Country) *and being careful in the Obſervance of religious Ceremonies*, (no matter what) *to be Piety to-*

wards the Gods : Iſocrates preſcribes, as Duty, *Adherence to the Religion of our Anceſtors.*

Pythagoras (νόμῳ ὡς διακεῖται) *to worſhip the Gods*, and Heroes next, according to the ſeveral Diſpoſitions of Law or Cuſtom.

Epictetus (Chap. 38.) (σπένδειν δὲ θύειν δὲ ἀπάρχεσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια πᾶσι προσήκει.) "It is all Mens Duty to make Libations, "offer Sacrifice, and perform religious Du- "ties and Rites, according to the Cuſtom of "their Countries." So *Tully (De Divinat.)* This, in ſhort, was the Doctrine of them all, both *Greeks* and *Romans* likewiſe, to be religious *more patrio & majorum. Perform divine Worſhip in all Things exactly according to the Cuſtom of your Anceſtors*, is *Mecænas's* Advice to *Auguſtus*, (*Suet. Dion. Caſſ.*) according to which Principle, they made it impoſſible for the religious Idolatries and Superſtitions of the World ever to be reformed, and even impious in thoſe who were ſenſible of them to attempt it, and by this their Doctrine they confirm the Juſtice of the Sentence given againſt their own *Socrates*; and that it might be the leſs ſuſpected whence this Doctrine of Compliance with what they diſliked proceeded, they trumped up an Oracle for it, that is recited by *Xenophon* (*Memorab.* 5.) that commanded all Men to worſhip their Gods according to the Cuſtom of each City and Country; and he takes Notice, that *Socrates* was a ſtrict and zealous Obſerver

of this Oracle, in ſacrificing and worſhipping the Gods according to the Cuſtom of their Anceſtors, *Lib.* 1. *that he frequently ſacrificed upon the publick Altars, as well as privately at home, and that by the Help of his Demon or Familiar, he told Fortunes*, and was a great Conſulter of Oracles, and took Pains to be thought as true and as rank an Idolater, as the beſt of them; which if they denied him to be, their own Doctrine and Oracle juſtified his Judges, ſo that both philoſophical and divine Authority injoined Conformity to, and Obſervation of all thoſe ſcandalous and obſcene Feaſts, Myſteries, and Initiations, *&c.* ſuch as thoſe modeſt and holy ones called by them, of *Bacchus*, *Ceres*, *Priapus*, the *Sacra* of *Venus Peribaſin*, and *Eleira*, viz. *Stradling Venus*, and *Whore Venus*; the *Lupercalia* amongſt the *Romans*, the *Ithyphallia* amongſt the *Athenians*, in *Socrates* and *Plato*'s Time, the *Orphean Myſteries* (*See Clem. Alex. Protrept.* and *Lactant. &c.*) and other ſhameleſs Rites and Myſteries, enough to raiſe Horror and Deteſtation of Mankind, as they did when their Secrets were laid open, and the Reaſon with it why they bound all, that were initiated into thoſe precious Myſteries, with Oaths, like our free Maſons, not to diſcover them; tho' the Shame of telling them might have been Tie enough to Men of any Modeſty that were drawn into them; and St. *Paul*

perhaps alludes to them, when he ſays, *It is a Shame even to ſpeak of thoſe Things which are done of them in Secret.* How contrary to this Doctrine was the Behaviour of the Apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians? and with a Spirit of generous Fortitude, how contrary to that of all theſe philoſophical Poltrones, were they poſſeſſed and acted, that freely expoſed their Lives, *that offered themſelves willingly*, and were tortured, *not accepting Deliverance*, to convince Mankind of thoſe Idolatries and religious Errors, that the Philoſophers, if they ſaw into, yet complyed with, and cockered them up in by Precept, and baſe and inſincere Profeſſion?

Socrates was the only Man amongſt them that ſteeled himſelf with Reſolution to tell his Citizens ſome of the Truth about their Gods, tho' his Heart failed him, and he really never did do it: yet we are made ſick with continually hearing him extolled upon that Account, as if he never had had his Fellow in the World, and the like had never been done by any Man before him, or ſince; tho' twice ten thouſand Chriſtian Martyrs have devoted themſelves to bear Witneſs of the Truth, in open Defiance to all that idolatrous Rage and Malice could inflict.

But, frighted with this their moral Hero's, Fate, however they magnify the Exploit, they ſeem to have all agreed together upon it, to have no more Martyrs amongſt them upon the religious Account, and as

Socrates

Socrates was the firſt Philoſopher that ever publickly ſuffered for Religion, (*Diog. Laert.*) ſo I do not find but he was alſo the laſt; for the Philoſophers took Care happily to prevent farther Miſchief amongſt them of that Kind, by wiſely giving it out as a Rule, that every Man ought to conform himſelf to the Religion of his Country, however ſcandalouſly falſe and ridiculous he thought it, and content himſelf with knowing privately better, ſo as to ſleep in whole Skins; tho' at the ſame time they were more afraid, than likely to be hurt, by doing otherwiſe, unleſs they were downright Atheiſts; but had the Danger been greater, yet had they had any Zeal for Truth, or for the Glory of that one true God, they are now pretended to have known and worſhipped, any Benevolence to Mankind, they would not have betrayed their Intereſts in an Affair of that Importance, by acting the inſincere and hypocritical Part they did. The *Athenians*, ſenſible of their Miſtake in putting *Socrates* to Death, left it more free and open afterwards, ſecurely to introduce amongſt them new Gods, or new Forms of religious Worſhip; and I do not find but every Man was as free to have acknowledged the one true God amongſt them, as their many falſe ones, that each Man for himſelf might take his Choice, and without worldly Diſadvantage or civil Inconvenience, might chuſe the Object of his

his own Worſhip, worſhip him as he pleaſed, and publickly propoſe it to the Magiſtrates for Propagation, and openly to make Proſelytes: Hence they had ſo many Gods among them of all Sorts but the true one, and religious Myſteries and Forms of Worſhip of all monſtrous and ridiculous Kinds; every Province, every City, every Village, had not only Gods of their own, but every Family had their ἑρέσιοι, their Lares and Penates proper to themſelves, which they worſhipped when they pleaſed, and as they pleaſed; and amongſt the *Romans*, Servants and Slaves in the ſame Family profeſſed what Religion each pleaſed, worſhipped what God they pleaſed, after what manner they pleaſed, differently both from the publick and from their Maſters, and this too in *Nero*'s Time, (*Tacit. Lib.* 14.) *diverſi ritus, externa ſacra*, ſays he that made the barbarous Speech againſt them; which was the ſame alſo in *Greece*, as we may find by that of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* vii. *Art thou called being a Servant? care not for it.* Nor in all the Cities where the Apoſtles preached, does the Introduction and Profeſſion of a new God or Religion appear to have been criminal, or a Violation of any Law eſtabliſhing Religion; or otherwiſe than as a Diſturbance of the State, and Inſinuations of Danger to the civil Government, which raiſed all the Perſecutions from the Gentile World, both againſt the Apoſtles, and

and Christians afterwards; and St. *Paul* we find was so far from incurring Penalty at *Athens*, by reflecting on their Gods and Superstitions, and proposing to them the only true God as the Object of Worship to them, and the Introduction of a new Form of worshipping him, that tho' he seem'd to be a *Babbler* to some of the self-conceited Philosophers, yet others, taking him to be a *Setter-forth of strange Gods*, and *to bring certain strange Things to their Ears*, and to be a Propagator of new religious Doctrines, and in a bolder and freer Manner than any of the Socratics ever ventured to do, was so far from being questioned, for the Illegality of this Proceeding, that he made these the Baits to draw them, and the rest of his Auditory about him, and to bespeak their Attention, and to help him to such a solemn and publick Hearing as he had contrived to bring about by "disputing with the *Jews* "in the Synagogue, and devout Persons, and "in the Market daily with them that met "with him;" and tho' they *took him*, it is said, yet it was not apprehending him as a Criminal, and *brought him* to *Mars*'s Hill, yet it was not in a violent Way, as a Malefactor, to be tried, but conducted him in a civil and intreating Manner, whither he was more desirous to go than they to have him; not like a *Socrates*, or *Diagoras*, or *Protagoras*, *&c.* in order to be punished; but they conducted him

him to the proper Place and Perſons, who, as Cenſors of Manners, and what Gods or religious Doctrines or Rites were fit to be farther admitted publickly amongſt them, might receive Propoſals from him of thoſe religious Innovations, which they found he was ſo full of, and wanted it ſo much to make known to them. And I do not find but it ſurprized the philoſophical Part of his Auditory, as well as the Vulgar, to hear of the Reſurrection, and that there was but one only God, and of a new Way of worſhipping him, which is a Teſtimony of the maſterly Talents and great Proficiency of the Stoicks and Epicureans in the Religion of Nature, and how perfectly *they taught the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God* at that Time, in that top Seat of improved rational Knowledge.

The *Romans* were ſo far from diſcouraging the Introduction of new Gods, or new Religions amongſt them, that it was a Piece of Popularity to do it, and they were ready to cloſe with any Propoſals of bettering their Hand, by being helped to any Gods of Reputation for Ability, to be added to thoſe they had already; and in queſt of mending themſelves as well in the Objects, as Forms and Rites of religious Worſhip, they ranſacked the World, and filled *Rome* with Gods of all Nations, and with foreign Myſteries and Forms of Worſhip from all Parts: Nor

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am I ſenſible, that any Law amongſt them injoined any Religion or religious Object in particular, in Excluſion to others; or that any Penalty forbid any, except only the Bacchanalia, when they were grown monſtrouſly ſcandalous, and threatened Danger to the State. Profeſſed Atheiſm indeed was what neither *Rome* nor *Athens* would bear, nor ſo much as doubting whether there were Gods or no; (*Tully de nat. Deo.*) but no Religion was eſtabliſhed by poſitive Laws, which only determined the Exerciſe of them as to Times, Places, Rites, and Forms of Celebration: But all their religious Inſtitutes ſtood upon the Authority and Reputation of their Inſtitutor, upon Cuſtom and unwritten Tradition from their Anceſtors; and *more patrio & majorum* was the fundamental Rule of acknowledging Gods, and of praying to, ſacrificing, and of all the divine Worſhip publick and common, not written or poſitively preſcribed by Law, but ſupported by Tradition, which Laws only determined and explained as to Circumſtances; inſomuch that we find having Books of Religion and written Forms of Worſhip, *&c.* cenſured as Innovation, (*Livy, Book* 25. *Chap.* 10.) *quicunque libros vaticinos precationeſque aut artem ſacrificandi conſcriptam haberet, eos libros omnes literaſque, &c. ad ſe deferret.* "Who-
"ever had any Books of Prophecy, of
"Prayers, or the Art of ſacrificing, that

" was written, they ſhould bring them all " to the Magiſtrate before *the firſt of April.*" And *Seneca*, when he therefore preſcribes Conformity to religious Inſtitutes, does not make them to be formally eſtabliſhed by Law, but (*tanquam ſancita legibus*) by what amounted to an Equivalent.

And this makes the Heathen Philoſophers the more inexcuſeable for living in and profeſſing Idolatry, Polytheiſm, and Superſtition, and complying as they did with the reigning and faſhionable Impieties of the World, if they had juſter Sentiments either of the Deity, or of his Worſhip, that they profeſſed in Contradiction to their Convictions, that they did not propagate the trueſt the moſt effectual Way, when they were under no Reſtraint from worldly Motive, and were as free to profeſs it publickly, as to know it privately. Why did they not at leaſt practiſe it privately? the *Jews* every where did it in their ſeveral Diſperſions, whom the Prejudices of Mankind againſt them expoſed to greater Inconveniencies, than it would have done the Philoſophers. Have any of the Philoſophers, that knew this, commended or recommended them for it?

" *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Tully*, *Seneca*, " *Epictetus*, *Marcus Antoninus*, and ſeveral " others that ſhall be nameleſs, plainly diſ- " covered by Reaſon the ſpiritual Worſhip " of the one true God,——nor does the Goſ- " pel command any Duty relating to God,---

" which they did not actually teach (*Plea for human Reaſon.*) Every Tittle of this as to every one of theſe Men is notoriouſly falſe.

How plainly *Socrates* diſcovered the one true God, and the ſpiritual Worſhip of him, we ſhall ſee preſently; but firſt let us ſee how well he taught it, by what *Plutarch* has recorded of him. Indeed it appears that he ſaw ſo plainly the Vanity and Folly of the *Athenians* Religion, that he was ſick of it, and could bear it no longer, that he had a Struggle in himſelf, whether he ſhould not tell the People his Mind, and let his Citizens into the Truth about their Gods and Religion, and was come to a generous Reſolution in himſelf to do ſo, let what would be the Conſequence. *Plutarch in Apophthegm.*) ϗδ' ἀνέξομαι ϗδ' ἀνήσω ἀλλὰ ϗ νέῳ, ϗ πρεσβυτέρῳ, ϗ ἁπλῶς, ϗ ἀεὶ, τῷ ἐντυγχάνοντ' προελθὼν ταυτὰ ἃ ϗ νῦν πυνθάνομαι. " I will not bear it, I will not let it " go as it does, but going up to every Man " that I meet, Old and Young, in down- " right Words, I will ſtill put the Queries " to him that I now do." But he took Wit in his Anger, and cooled upon it, and never executed this Reſolution, or promulged his Doctrine, farther than was conſiſtent with his Safety, tho' what he did that Way happened to coſt him his Life; for as he lived by his Lectures, which none were admitted to but thoſe that paid him well, ſo Policy,

if Danger had not done it, made him cautious of ſpoiling his own Trade by divulging his ſecret Doctrines, which he inſtilled only into his Scholars; and his Indictment therefore run for ſeducing and corrupting Youth; for he took Care that they ſhould have no Proof againſt him, of his diſowning either their Gods or their Worſhip, by profeſſing and Compliances to his dying Minute; and ſtood ſtoutly to it upon his Trial, that he was innocent as to that Part of his Indictment, which concerned their Gods; and the *Athenians* Repentance for putting him to Death, was not founded upon the Injuſtice of their Indictment, for putting him to Death, for not believing thoſe to be Gods which his Country believed to be ſo, but upon their Conviction that he was innocent, and that they were miſtaken in him, and that he was as downright and rank an Idolator as the beſt of them; for if the Veneration that they paid his Memory, had ariſen from his being guilty of his Indictment, and inſtead of believing in their Gods, teaching the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, inſtead of erecting a Statue to him, we muſt have heard of a general Reformation of Religion among them, both as to the Object, and Manner of Worſhip; but we do not find any *Athenians* converted from their Idolatries, or one Man amongſt all the Penitents, the wiſer or better worſhipper

ſhipper of the one true God for him: And no Wonder,

Since we may find how well he underſtood and practiſed the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God:

1*ſt*, By his Writing Hymns to *Apollo* and *Diana*.

2*dly*, By his Vow to *Pan*, (*Plat. Phædrus*) "Gentle *Pan*, and ye Gods that inhabit this "Place, give me a beautiful Inſide, and "make me anſwerably beautiful without." Which outward Beauty as he very much wanted, and his God *Pan* no leſs than himſelf, whom *Socrates* much reſembled, ſo he was a proper God to pray to, to mend Forms, that could not mend his own: A Prayer to *Pan*, when he learned to friſk and dance in his old Age, would have been more ſuitable.

3*dly*, By his Swearing by *Juno*, (*Xenoph. Conviv.*) an Oath proper to Women, and affected by Pathicks and Men emaſculate, and unnaturally leud and effeminate to the laſt Degree of Shameleſſneſs.

4*thly*, By his charging ſo ſtrictly, when a dying, his Friends not to forget to ſacrifice the Cock for him, which he and they among them had vowed to *Æſculapius*, for his Recovery to be ſure; which ſhews what a Pack of Idolatrous Wiſeacres he and thoſe about him were; for this Vow was a deep Project to help him againſt the Hemlock, and was a very ſilly Buſineſs; for if the Hemlock

lock began to work, and the old Gentleman, growing delirious, began to talk he knew not what himſelf, about a Cock and a Bull, yet *Plato* need not have recorded his Maſter's Reveries, *O* Crito, *we owe* Æſculapius *a Cock, be ſure to pay it, and do not forget it, good* Crito. Had he recovered, *Æſculapius* might have deſerved his Cock; but after a Man's dead, to order his Executors to thank the Doctor for his Recovery, is ſomething extraordinary; but *Æſculapius* had recover'd a dead Man, and tho' he was ſwinged for it, yet they pleaſed themſelves with ſome Hopes among them, that for the Sake of this Cock he might venture at it once again; or they thought that *Æſculapius* might ſue him for his Promiſe below, where Cocks and Money were ſcarce; *dementiſſimum hominem putarem ſi morbo affectus periiſſet, cum vero hoc ſanus fecerit eſt ipſe inſanus qui eum putet eſſe ſapientem.* (*Lactant.*)

5thly, By his Defence upon his Trial, by pleading not guilty to his Indictment, and ſtanding to it that he *never either ſacrificed to, ſwore by, or ſo much as named any other Gods but* Jupiter, Juno, *&c.* (*Xenoph.*) which at the ſame time was a bouncing Lye, for he was noted for a common Swearer by any Thing that came in his Way, *by a Plane-Tree* (*Ariſt. Nub*) *by a Dog, by a Gooſe*, (*Lactant. Lib.* 3.) and St. *Chryſoſtom* rightly obſerves, that it was like Scholar, like Maſter,

Maſter, with him; and *Plato* ὁ τȣτȣ̃ διδάςκαλος περί ειδῶλα ἐπτοηται. His Scholar *Xenophon* was both a very religious Man, and imitated his Maſter *Socrates* even to Affectation, (*Diog. Laert.*) and a great Sacrificer; and if *Socrates* had either taught or underſtood any ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, we muſt have met with ſome of it in him.

If *Plato* underſtood and taught ſo plainly the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, how came he ſo inconſtantly and inconſiſtently with himſelf, ſometimes to make one Thing to be God, ſometimes another, as all the reſt of them did (*Platonis inconſtantia; &c. Cic. de nat Deo.*)

If *Ariſtotle* underſtood ſo well, and taught the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, how came he to make the World a God? How in his laſt Will to order his Executor to perform his Vow to *Jupiter Soter* and *Minerva Servatrix*, for the Welfare of *Micanor*? How came he to ſet up his Mother's Statue in the Temple of *Ceres* for a Goddeſs, *&c.*

If *Epictetus* underſtood and taught the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, why does he direct us to *Jupiter*, and to *Fate*, as Gods? (*Cap.* 38. τῆς περὶ θεῶν ευσεβειας, *of Religion towards the Gods*;) and yet why does the Title run in the plural Number, and why does he every where ſpeak of them as many ſtill, inſtead of one? towards whom he directs, as ſpiritual Worſhip, the Diſ-

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charge of all the heathen Fooleries in Faſhion.

Let me obſerve, that under the Name *Fate* is comprehended alſo Providence, ſo far as the Stoicks profeſſed the Belief of any, which (πρόνοια) Providence they groſly idolized in their Conceptions, as we find here by *Epictetus* joining it to *Jupiter*, and making it a Perſon, *aniculam fatidicam*, a Kind of little Fortune and Deſtiny diſpenſing old Hag, a Kind of Sybil, or Mother *Shipton*, as moſt of them fancied their Gods of human Shape.

If *Tully* ſo clearly diſcovered and taught the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, why is the Title of his Book *de natura deorum* in the plural Number? Why ſhould all his Diſputants ſtate the Queſtion in like Manner *an dii ſint*? And why at leaſt does not himſelf, or ſome of his Managers, determine in Favour of this great Truth, but ſhuts it up as he does in Uncertainty? His promiſing an *Apotheoſis* to his Daughter *Tullia*, and to conſecrate her into a Goddeſs, does not look like the Act of a ſpiritual Worſhipper, or Knower of the one true God.

If *Marcus Antoninus*, who was an Emperor, and under no Reſtraint from worldly Motive to make him diſguiſe his Sentiments, who might not only have worſhipped himſelf, but introduced what God he pleaſed, and what Form of Worſhip he pleaſed, or have made himſelf

himſelf a God, as others did, had he encouraged it; and his Statues, like others, were ſacrificed to, and the Worſhippers of the only true God were perſecuted by him for not doing it; and who was a Stoick into the Bargain, and bound by his Principles neither to value Pleaſure or fear Pain, to ſpeak the Truth boldly at all Times, and not to ſhrink from the Duty of his Station for any Conſiderations of Intereſt, and who is allowed alſo to have been a very good and pious Man; and is it conſiſtent with the Character of ſo good an Emperor, ſuch a Philoſopher, ſuch a Father and Friend to Mankind, to ſuppoſe that he ſhould inſincerely not profeſs publickly that Faith and Knowledge of the one true God, and the Worſhip of him after the worthieſt Manner; or that he ſhould not add Authority to his Example, to work the ſame Convictions in the reſt of Mankind, that his own ſuperior Reaſon had wrought in himſelf; but ſhould comply with what he diſapproved; and that he ſhould not at leaſt teach the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, in the moral Inſtructions that he has left behind him, but mention ſtill his (Θεὸς) Gods, and their Superſtitious Forms of Worſhip, as true Religion?

Polytheiſm, in ſhort, was the predominant Principle in them all; and if they were not ignorant of the Worſhip of the one true

God, ſo much viler Wretches they to do as they did.

And were it true what theſe Men give out farther, that there is no Precept, Command, or Duty relating to God, that we can produce from Revelation, which they cannot produce from theſe Philoſophers; yet there is a great Difference with regard to the Aſſurance of the Rectitude, Truth, Juſtice, and Goodneſs, and as great with regard to Sanction; but it is notoriouſly falſe, that all the Duties of true Religion, injoined by Revelation, may be produced from the Philoſophers, unleſs we allow theſe Men a Right of making what they pleaſe only to be true Religion, and what is found amongſt the Philoſophers; but then they muſt make a great Part of the Scripture to be falſe Religion, becauſe there are a great many Things more commanded there, both to be believed and done, than was ever commanded or thought of by Philoſophers: And whatever Precepts God gives out, I ſhall always take to be true Religion; and, on the other Hand, whatever he does not command, to be falſe Religion, or no Religion at all, the *Commandments of Men, and Will worſhip*; and conſequently all the Precepts of Philoſophers, as they are their Precepts, tho' true in themſelves, are yet falſe Religion.

And what is farther ſaid, that *Socrates*, *Plato*, *&c.* as they received not their Religion from Revelation,

Revelation, ſo neither did they pretend to ſupport it by falſe Revelation; they are both falſe; for they are both juſtly ſuppoſed to have had the nobleſt of their Sentiments from Revelation, and did both what they could to ſupport their Doctrines by counterfeit Revelation: *Socrates* pretended to be directed by his Demon; and *Plato* would fain have been thought inſpired, and to ſooth that Vanity, was called δαιμόνιος, Demonacted, and formed his Writings and Stile in Imitation of the Oraculous.

After the Promulgation of the Goſpel, who were they that chiefly and moſt bitterly oppoſed it, and upon that Account, becauſe it introduced the Knowledge and ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God, and ſupported, with all the Reaſon and the Light both of Nature and Art, that they were Maſters of, the Heathens in their Idolatries and religious Vanities, but the Succeſſors of theſe ſame philoſophical Hypocrites and Sophiſters, who are cried up as the ſo plain Teachers of that Knowledge, and Practicers of that ſpiritual Worſhip? Theſe were the Set of Men, who, when they found that their philoſophical Meaſures would not do their Buſineſs, in ſupporting Idolatries and Superſtitions, ſpirited up Emperors and Magiſtrates, with all the blackeſt Arts of Delation and Calumny which they could invent, to ſuppreſs, by bloody Violence, thoſe

Worſhippers of the one true God, whom their Reaſons and their Lights of Nature they found could not ſtand againſt, tho' they were naked, and themſelves had the armed World and its Authority on their Side to back them; theſe were they that wrought up the Bigotry of the People into Zeal for thoſe Idotries and Superſtitions, which, together with them, they profeſſed, whilſt they laughed at and deſpiſed, to that Degree of blind Rage, as to ſacrifice to their Devils ſo many thouſand true and generous Profeſſors of the Worſhip of the one true God, only for being ſo, the meaneſt of whom was more valuable than that Heathen *Socrates* of theirs, that they keep ſuch an endleſs Pother about, that turn even mild and good-natured Emperors into *Nero*'s and *Caligula*'s.

And to give at laſt ſome Specimens of the Morality of theſe ſo celebrated philoſophical Hypocrites themſelves, with regard as well to their Doctrines as their Practice, that our Religion of Nature Men cry up as ſo many Wonders of Virtue, that they canonize as their Heathen Saints, that are their Patriarchs and Fathers in Religion, to whoſe Works they refer us as their Scriptures, and to whoſe Lives for our Patterns, and then let him that likes them ſay, *Sit anima mea cum Philoſophis.*

And firſt, we find them almoſt all charged, on undoubted Record, with the Guilt of infamous

infamous and unnatural Luſt, not only Fornication, Adultery, and Inceſt, but Pederaſty and Sodomy, active and paſſive.

Solon, one of their ſeven wiſe Men, and the famous Lawgiver of the *Athenians*, *Plutarch* tells us, (*Amat.*) not only himſelf uſed this infamous Trade of Sodomy, but recommended it as honeſt, and eſtabliſhed it by Law, (*Chryſoſt.*) forbidding it only to Servants, or with them, as a refined Pleaſure, proper only for the Ingenuous, and to be reſerved to Men of Quality and Diſtinction; and he himſelf made Travel and a trading Voyage a Pretence for taking a lewd Jaunt with *Piſiſtratus* on that monſtrous Account; and his buying up Girls for the publick Service of young Fellows; his inſtituting Brothel-Houſes, and eſtabliſhing them by Law, and endowing them with Immunities, his building a Temple to *Venus Pandemia*, at the Expence of Harlots, are Inſtances of his being a compleat Moraliſt.

Socrates, whom the Oracle, as he ſaid himſelf, (*Xen.*) pronounced to be wiſer than *Euripides*, who was wiſer than *Sophocles*, and ſo to be ſure the wiſeſt of Men; tho' not much the wiſer, I ſhould think, for the Devil's ſaying ſo; nor for the Argument that was the Ground of the Sentence, which was, his having declared juſt before that he was an Ideot, and knew nothing at all; and it is Pity, ſince he need but have made one Trouble

Trouble of it, but he had got alſo the Devil's Verdict for his being the beſt, as well as wiſeſt Man, by declaring himſelf a Villain. But this ſame Oracle at laſt ſeems to have been juggled up between him and his Crony *Cherephon*, who went upon the Errand to *Apollo*, and upon his own Head: How any body came to go, looks odd; had it been by Authority or Deputation, they would have choſe an indifferent Perſon: but *Cherephon* happening to be the Man, looks very ſuſpicious, becauſe τῶν πάνυ γνωρίμων Σωκράτης ὁ Χαιρεφῶν' (*Ariſt. Nub. Schol.*) *Socrates*, and *Cherephon* his Oracle-fetcher, were huge great and intimate; and *Ariſtophanes* expoſes them together as looked upon by the Town as Confederates and Accomplices; and as *Socrates* profeſſed Fortune-telling, which he pretended was a Gift to him from the Gods, this *Cherephon*, a black, ill-looked, ſqueaking Fellow, was the *Whaccum* to this *Sydrophel*, that brought in Griſt to his Mill; and he had either ventured to tamper with the Managers of the Oracle, if ſuch was given out, or to play himſelf the *Apollo*, thinking it might never be enquired into; but it was ſuſpected on ſeveral Accounts, particularly in not being given out in the oraculous Metre. *Socrates* indeed himſelf pretended, (*Xen. Apol.*) that he had good Witneſs for the Truth of it, and that ſeveral Perſons heard it beſides *Cherephon*;

phon; but it is plain the *Athenians* did not believe it, by their condemning of him notwithſtanding. But the Fact of the Oracle, true or a Cheat, his ſending to *Delphos* upon ſuch an Errand, his inſiſting upon it as a divine Teſtimony, are Demonſtrations what a ſpiritual Worſhipper of the one true God he was.

Socrates, I ſay, that was the Father and Founder of moral Philoſophy, which is now advanced to the Title and Dignity of the Religion of Nature, tho' 'till then it had laid blended with Sophiſtry, Rhetorick, and Logick, which were what he chiefly profeſſed, together with Fortune-telling; which, for the Enlargement of his Trade, he ſtruck out from them all into a diſtinct Province, by the methodical Arrangement, and a formal Digeſtion of Actions relating to ſocial Life into Virtues and Vices: This ſo pious and excellent *Socrates*, as an Inſtance of his Sapience in Morality, was deeply tainted with this foul Diſeaſe of Arſenocoitiſm, *(Philo de vita Contempl.)* and *Laertius* mentions both the Perſons corrupted by him that Way, and by whom alſo himſelf was corrupted in Turn, being guilty both the active and paſſive Way; and one of the Articles of his Indictment was for debauching Youths, which cannot mean his corrupting their Principles with regard to their Gods, becauſe then the two Articles of his Indictment

Indictment would have fallen into one and the ſame; neither does it appear that his Lectures had any Effect that way, by his Scholars renouncing either the Gods or Religion of their Country, which Article he ſtoutly denies, and pleads not guilty to, but as to the Charge of debauching the carnal Way, he makes no Defence; and *Xenophon* (*Apol.*) only endeavours to extenuate by Attonement for it, by the excellent Principles that he inſtilled into them other ways; and theſe Youths muſt be ingenuous Youths, and thoſe of Diſtinction, as well becauſe ſuch only were his Diſciples, and amongſt whom his Converſation that way lay, as becauſe by the Inſtitution of their Founder it would not have been otherwiſe Capital; and he was ſo full of this ſodomitical Form of Luſt, that he betrays himſelf frequently guilty, and confirms his Indictment, and thereby ſhews that *Xantippe* was not ſo bad a Wife without the higheſt Provocation, as finding herſelf yoked to ſuch an old beaſtly (*Silenus*) Baboon, ſo unnaturally addicted; his Conſciouſneſs of which Guilt was enough to have ſtopt his Mouth, had he been no Philoſopher, and to make bearing with her Tongue no Virtue of Patience, and to juſtify the Reproaches caſt upon him by *Zeno*, *O hominem ſcurram*, and embelliſhed by *Lactantius*, (*Lib.* 3.) *ineptum*, *perditum*, *deſperatum*, *&c.*

Inſtances

Inſtances of this are his calling himſelf *the Slave of Love*, (*Cel. Rhodig. p.* 882.) and a rare Sort of Love it was you find; and ſaying, that *Love Matters were his Maſter-piece*; and whilſt he pretended to know nothing elſe, yet here he threw off his wonted Cloak of Modeſty and Diſſimulation, and owned himſelf profoundly skilled in *Eroticks*; his ſaying that *he did not remember when he was not in Love*, (*Xenoph. Conviv.*) *and engaged in ſome Amour*, like *Petronius*'s Madam, that could not remember when ſhe was not a Whore; that *he knew no greater Bleſſing that could happen to Youth than a good Lover, and to a Lover than a faithful Minion*; his making *Cupid to be a God* (*Plat. Phædrus*) and what *Xenophon* makes him pitch upon as his peculiar Excellence, (*Conviv.*) that he was a right good Pandar and Procurer, as well as Practitioner, -- *that he loved kiſſing better than fighting*; and in the Diſpute between him and *Clitobulus*, a young Lad, at whom his Mouth watered, tho' in his Father's Preſence, *whether was the handſomer, and the better kiſſing Lips*; his ordering, like the King at Queſtions and Commands, that he that had the Verdict for him, *ſhould be kiſſed round by the Company*; are Inſtances of his great Proficiency in the Religion of Nature, as all the vile Stuff that he is there made to ſay, and to be aſſenting to alſo, is; as his being put in mind of being catched *with*

his Cheek and part of his naked Body close to that of a young Lad's; his saying upon it, *that he had a Tickling at his Heart five Days after upon it*; and was as if he had been stung with a *Tarantula*, or bit by a mad Dog, (venomous Creature) (*Xenoph. Conviv.*) Such Stuff as this is out of all virtuous and modest Character, is too rank and luscious to pass for Drollery, and deservedly got him the Nick-name of *(Scurra Athenienſis) the Ribaldry Profeſſor of Athens*, as too unclean and coarse a Cover to wrap refined Sentiments up in, and would create Suspicion, were there no Grounds for it beside; but where a Man is formally tried for bestial Practice, *Plato* and *Xenophon* must, one would think, see the Impropriety of putting such Words in his Mouth, as would confirm the Justice of his Sentence, and clench the Guilt of the Crime upon him.

Add to this, his reckoning Dancing amongst the serious Parts of Education, his looking upon it as *a religious Exerciſe, that came into the World together with the Love of the Gods*, (Things very well paired) and giving Credit to his Words, learning to dance himself when he was an old Man; a Prayer upon which Occasion to *Pan*, that he might frisk and caper well, whose Talent lay that Way, had been more proper than that for Beauty: And *Ariſtophanes* (*nubes*) mentions an obscene Dance in Fashion at that Time, called

called the Κόρδαξ, which it is not unſuitable to his Behaviour to think our old Moraliſt learned, and which deſcended from him to his moral Succeſſors, and is what is noted by the Satyriſt (*Juven.*)

——— *et de virtute locuti*
clunem agitant.

As the Crime itſelf did.

Inter Socraticos notiſſima foſſa Cinedos.

The divine *Plato*, tho' he is ſaid to diſapprove it in his Laws, and ſome have attempted to clear him from it, yet is made to ſully his divine Character with the Guilt, of it by *Laertius* in his Life, by *Aulus Gellius* (*Book* 18, 19.) by *Plutarch* (*de educ. Lib.*) by *Ariſtippus*, and as having had great Variety of both Sexes, as *Stella*, *Dion*, *Phedrus*, *Alexis*, of the Male Kind; inſomuch that lewd Women uſed to quote him as their Patron, from his Dogme that Women ought to be common, (*Book* 4. *de Repub. and Arrian on Epict.*). *The Grecian Philoſophers*, ſays *Grotius*, (*Book* 2. *de ver. Rel. Chriſt.*) *ſeem to have took Pains to cover their ſodomitical Turpitude, by putting an honeſt Name to it*: And *Philo*, tho' a Friend to *Plato* (*de vit. Contempl.*) looked upon *his Banquet to be nothing but a Scene of unnatural Luſt, where*

Men are not repreſented as running mad for Love of Women, but Men for Love of Men; and *Xenophon*'s Banquet is juſt ſuch another Scene of monſtrous Lewdneſs, where *Socrates* is the chief Actor and Promoter; and all their Cant of *ſpiritual Love, and their celeſtial Cupid, and heavenly Venus*, is but gilding over their deteſtable Obſcenity with fine Epithets; and under the Notion of philoſophizing in this ſo precious Banquet, fit to be acted in Sodom, putting upon Mankind their Turpitudes as artificial Integument, in which were wrapped up myſteriouſly refined Truths and Pleaſures of the ſame Name, but more excellent Kind and Nature: Of the ſame Mind, as to this Banquet, were *Lucian* (*de Amor.*) and others.

Periander, another of theſe celebrated wiſe Men, a Philoſopher, and yet a Tyrant, two Characters the *Greeks* rarely allow to meet, committed Inceſt with his Mother, nothing ſcrupulous of the Crime, kicked his Wife big with Child to Death, to oblige his Harlots; (*Diog. Laert.*) and as to Fornication, he and almoſt all the reſt of theſe Philoſophers, thought it no Vice or Shame publickly to profeſs and Practice it.

Theodorus, that was honoured with the Title of a *heavenly Philoſopher*, and of *a God*, tho' ranked by *Tully* with thoſe that believed none, taught, that wiſe Men might thieve,

thieve, commit Adultery, Sacrilege, *&c.* when they found a ſeaſonable Opportunity.

Menedemus is marked with ſodomitical Practice with a Lad that was *Aſclepiades's* Minion, his Friend, Brother, and Son-in-Law.

Ariſtippus taught, in like manner, that a Philoſopher might ſteal, commit Adultery, and Sacrilege, when Opportunity offered; and might publickly, without Shame, lie with Women or Boys, as his Inclination led him. (*Diog. Laert.*)

Phedon got himſelf a Livelihood by the infamous Trade of proſtituting his Body, having the moral *Socrates* for one of his Cuſtomers (*Diog. Laert.*) who brought him out of a Brothel-houſe for his own particular Uſe.

Antiſthenes taught, that a Philoſopher ſhould lie with all the handſome Females that fell in his Way, (*Laert.*) tho', for his own Part, he was ſo far from being ſqueamiſh, that he valued himſelf for dealing with ſuch dirty Drabs, as nobody elſe would touch, (*Xenoph. Conviv.*) "giving this Reaſon for it, that he "was ſure to have no Rivals, but keep them "all to himſelf; and that their Deſpair of "other Cuſtomers would make them prize "him the more:" Being a Sodomite into the Bargain. (*Laert.* and *Apollodorus.*)

Diogenes and the Cynicks were mere Brutes in Venereal Affairs, doing like the Dogs, that they had their Name from upon that Account,

Account, what related to *Ceres* and *Venus*, ſhameleſly in the open Streets; and *Clem. Alexandrinus* calls their Marriage *Cynogamia*, *viz.* wedding Dog and Bitch Faſhion; making not only ſtealing, but Sacrilege lawful, it being their common Trade to be ϛωμυλόχοι, to ſteal from Altars, *&c.* (*Lucian*) and no Impiety for Men to eat one another; nor was it peculiar only to the Cynicks, but the Opinion and Doctrine of both the Stoicks and Epicureans, that Inceſt was both innocent and lawful (*Sextus Philoſ. Theoph. Antioch.*)

Chryſippus allowed, in like manner, Community of Wives in an inceſtuous Way, Mothers and Daughters with Fathers and Sons. (*Laert.*)

Eudoxus was a Pathick. (*Laert. Book* 7.)

Bion, the Platonick, was a prophane and ſcandalous Wretch as ever lived, ſo notorious for debauching both Sexes, that he was called the Corrupter of Youth. (*Laert. Book* 4.)

Ariſtotle had both his *Hebe*'s and his *Ganymede*'s ſtill about him; is charged with Sodomy with his Couſin *Hermias the Eunuch*; and with ſo much at the ſame time on his Concubine *Pythais*, that he ſacrificed to her, and writ a Pæan or religious Hymn in Praiſe of this his Goddeſs; who, like ſeveral others, were deified for their Lewdneſs, and had their religious Rites and Myſteries publickly and ſolemnly obſerved, ſuitable to their Characters. And that he died the Man he lived,

lived, appears by the Proviſion made for his natural Children in his laſt Will, and by the Number of Boys he kept; *my Will is, that none of my Boys be ſold*, (*Diog. Laert.*) for by the Quality of this Stock, we may perceive what Trade the Owner drove with it; and ſpeaking of *Minos*, that juſt Law-giver of *Crete*, inſtituting maſculine *Venery*, he calls his doing this a wiſe and philoſophical Inſtitution (πολλὰ περιλοσόφησεν). *He inſtituted many Things Philoſopher like, and Sodomy for one*; and gives *this political Reaſon for it, that Women might overſtock the Community with too many Children.* He is alſo charged with Covetouſneſs to a high Degree, and everlaſtingly laying at *Alexander* a Beggar for more; whom, in Return for his Benefactions, he is ſuppoſed at laſt to have poiſoned; and compleated his Wickedneſs with Self-Murder.

Epicurus uſed both Boys and Females for his Pleaſures (*Laert. Book* 10.); but this was what might but be expected from him, as conſiſtent with his impious Principles, as his allowing a Philoſopher to ſteal, provided he ſhould not be found out; as the *Lacedemonians* did their Youths, for the Encouragement of Ingenuity.

Tully, the grave and great Maſter of moral Offices, was a Haunter of Harlots Houſes, and, when in Years, having a Wife, and Children grown up, and in Times too of Melancholy,

Melancholy, yet I find, in an Epiſtle, gives an Account of an Entertainment that was agreeably enlivened, by ſetting a Whore at the upper End of the Table. His Promiſe of conſecrating his Daughter *Tullia* into a Goddeſs, ſhews him Maſter of the Knowledge and ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God; as his making Warring upon barbarous Nations a Species of Hunting; as *Ariſtotle* before thought it was but natural to do it; and accordingly both *Greeks* and *Romans* allowed Depredations and Plunderings of them by private Hands without Provocation, as not only lawful, but honourable Atchievement and Employment: To which we may add, their Gladiators, or forcing Men to kill each other to make Sport for the Rabble; their allowing human Sacrifices, *Grotius* of which ſays, *quem morem nec Greca erudita, &c.* "which Cuſtom neither the *Grecian* Learn-" ing, nor the *Roman* Laws took away," but it deſcended down low in the Empire; and *Lactantius* mentions the Continuance of it in his Time, by the Sacrifice of a Man to *Jupiter Latialis*; (*etiam nunc ſanguine colitur humano*) and in *Cyprus* it was not aboliſhed till *Adrian*'s Time: The like Sacrifice the *Romans* performed to Saturn, by throwing a Man into the *Tyber* from the *Milvian* Bridge; to which add, the killing or expoſing their Children, if they diſliked their Sex or Number, an Inhumanity allowed both by

by *Greek* and *Roman* Philoſophers and Legiſlators, on which St. *Paul* grounds his Character of ἄϛοργοι, *without natural Affection*; ſelling or changing their Wives; allowing both older and younger Women to wreſtle publickly naked with young Fellows; as *Plato* in his Commonwealth directs, and gives this Reaſon for it, *that Women ought to ſtrip, becauſe they ſhould cover themſelves with Virtue inſtead of Cloaths; and that he that laughs at a Woman's ſtripping herſelf naked for a Good, laughs like a Blockhead at he knows not what.*

Nay, ſo far was *Sodomy* from being puniſhed amongſt the *Athenians*, under the Inſtitutes of their famous Philoſophers, and in their Times, that *Æſchylus*, and *Sophocles* alſo, had a Tragedy publickly acted upon the Stage, called the *(Pederaſtes) Boy-Lover*, and had not, unlikely, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *&c.* Spectators; and *Ariſtophanes (nubes)* reflects upon all the Top of the City as *Catamites* (ευρυπρώκτϛ χυσοχανοπρώκτϛ); and no Wonder, when trained up to it, both by Doctrine and Practice, in the Schools of theſe then flouriſhing Mirrors of Morality, and the Religion of Nature, who had it from their Gods, who were almoſt all made guilty of it, and ſeveral of them owed their Deification to it, as *Ganymede*, *Antinous*, *Orpheus*, for being the celebrated Authors of it; and the Practick was Part of the religious Myſteries and ſa-

cred Rites, into which, as a Degree of Holineſs, to raiſe their Characters of being Religious, they were initiated, and was part of the ſpiritual Worſhip of the one true God that *Socrates*, *Plato*, *&c.* taught Compliance withal: At virtuous *Lacedemon* they had ſelect Regiments, made up of Pathicks and their Gallants, that the Sight of their He-Miſſes might heighten the Courage of their Sodomitical Heroes; the like they had alſo amongſt the *Thebans* and *Eleans*; and *Pauſanias* ſays, that an Army, compoſed in this Manner of Sodomites, would be the braveſt that could be raiſed; and *Jerome*, the Peripatetick, is ſaid to extol it, as That by the Uſe of which many Tyrants had been deſtroyed; not to mention the (γυμνοπαιαι) Feaſt of Boy-kiſſing amongſt the *Lacedemonians* in *Socrates* and *Plato*'s Time, for Prizes, to which all *Greece* reſorted far and near, as to the Olympick or Iſthmian Games, that laſted ſeveral Days; for *Xenophon* mentions the (τελευταια) the laſt Day of it. (*Conviv.*)

I think it juſtly obſerved, that as the *Ægyptians*, that worſhipped Leeks, Onions, *&c.* were yet wiſer Idolaters than the *Greeks*, that worſhipped notorious Whores and Rogues; ſo the *Greeks* were wiſer than the *Romans*, who deified Fevers and other Diſtempers, Storms, and the moſt trifling Actions, Paſſions, Forms of Motion, and Circumſtances of Life. (*See Varro*, *&c.*)

The

The *Romans* indeed at firſt, whilſt rude and barbarous, puniſhed Sodomy with Death; but as the *Grecian* Philoſophy opened their Eyes, and Reaſon by the Light of Nature brightened up the Religion of Nature to them, they practiſed this Doctrine of it to a great Height; and tho' what they called the *Scantinian Law* was made againſt it, yet that Law confined the Crime to the corrupting the Ingenuous only; which, as *Grotius* obſerves, was little regarded, and the Mode ſo far prevailed, that it grew obſolete, and was thought neither a Crime nor an Infamy publickly to profeſs the Guilt of it, or Scandal to be caught in it; not even in *Auguſtus*'s Time, who, from its being before pecuniary, made its Puniſhment once more capital; as we find by *Horace*, Maiden *Virgil* himſelf, and *Martial* in the After-ages; and the Dignity of the Perſon was, as amongſt the *Greeks*, only a greater Provocation to the Wickedneſs, and Triumph to the Accompliſher.

And how imperfect their Morals were on other Accounts, we find by their ſtriking out many Virtues, and as many Vices; their not reckoning Hatred, Malice, Revenge, amongſt Immoralities; of which ſee Examples in *Grotius* (*de ver. Rel. Chriſt.*) in *Ariſtotle*, *Tully*; their making Suicide not only lawful, but heroically virtuous; their recording Aſſaſſinations, Perfidies, Violations of the Laws

of

of Truth and Faith, as gallant Atchievements in their Chronicles.

Theſe are modern Leaders from the Academy, the *Lycæum*, and the Pont; theſe the burning and ſhining Lights of *Rome* and of *Athens*, whoſe Lives and Doctrines are Examples, and Demonſtration of the Sufficiency of Reaſon to conduct us in Religion, and of the Needleſſneſs of divine Revelation; theſe are the Men in whom the Religion of Nature ſhone out in its greateſt Purity and Perfection, unleſs our modern heathen Saints of the *Grecian* Coffee-houſe have outſhone thoſe its old Schools.

FINIS.

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